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ABSTRACT

A two week survey was conducted to: (1) investigate the state of developmental book activity in Laos, (2) determine the priority of Laos's book needs, (3) develop program recommendations to meet the needs and (4) formulate regional recommendations. Recommendations on materials and methods needed are: (1) continuation of textbook distribution on a one book per pupil, per subject, per grade basis, (2) revision of primary school textbooks, (3) development and distribution of teachers' manuals, (4) creation of depository textbook libraries, (5) establishment of a central library division, (6) unification of the National Library and National Archives Library, (7) placement of the new National Library near the proposed university to provide a single research collection that can serve both as the National Library and the university general library, (8) expansion of cluster libraries and community reading rooms and (9) development of materials for new readers at all age grade levels. (MF)

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DEVELOPMENTAL BOOK ACTIVITIES
AND NEEDS IN
LAOS

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AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AID - The Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C.
CBA/AID - Central Book Activities Unit of AID/Washington.
ENI - Teacher training school (Ecole Normale d'Instituteurs).
ESP - National Education Center (Ecole Supérieure de Pédagogie).
IVS - International Voluntary Services.
MOE - Ministry of (National) Education.
MPC - Materials Production Center of the Ministry of Education.
PPC/EHR - Office of Program and Policy Coordination, Education and Human Resources Division of AID/Washington.
PSI - Primary School Inspector.
UNESCO - United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
USAID - U.S. Agency for International Development Mission to Laos.
USIA - U.S. Information Agency, Washington, D.C.
USIS - U.S. Information Service Mission to Laos

PREFACE

This report is the sixth in a series of country studies of developmental book activity in East Asia.* It covers the Kingdom of Laos, which was surveyed by the Wolf Management Services team from February 19 through March 3, 1967.

The six-country project was developed and funded by the Central Book Activities unit of the Agency for International Development to implement President Johnson's February 2, 1966 recommendations concerning increased international flow of books and other educational materials. Of broad scope and interest, the survey aims were (1) investigation of the state of developmental book activities in each country, (2) determination of priority country book needs, (3) development of a set of realistic, viable program recommendations to help answer the needs of each country, and (4) formulation of regional recommendations relating to multilateral and bilateral book and library efforts.

The scope of work in Laos included assessment of books and instructional materials in the educational process; books and materials used by individuals for the improvement of reading skills and for learning enrichment; books for technical and professional purposes; and books used in libraries.

The term "books" is used in the title and body of this report in its widest sense to denote any items in printed form for instructional, educational or developmental purposes. In many respects, Laos is in the initial phase of the struggle against underdevelopment. Its use of printed materials is embryonic. Thus, leaflets for farmers, pamphlets for rural development workers, brochures, periodicals and journals--and even mimeographed village newspapers--are all encompassed within the meaning of "books."

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*Previously published reports in this series can be obtained from the Chief, Central Book Activities, PPC/EHR, AID, Department of State, Washington, D. C. 20523. They cover: the Republic of Korea (September 1966), the Republic of Vietnam (October 1966), the Philippines (November 1966), Indonesia (June 1967), and Thailand (August 1967).

The survey team for Laos consisted of three specialists:

> Stanley A. Barnett (Chief of Party): Director of International Operations, Wolf Management Services; economic development specialist and consultant; team chief of the 1964 CBA Turkish study of books as tools for national growth, and of the 1966-67 developmental book activity surveys in South Korea, South Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Laos--and editor of the survey reports.
>
> Emerson L. Brown: book publishing consultant; former Vice President of McGraw-Hill Book Company and Editorial Director of its schoolbook division; participant in CBA developmental book surveys in Africa, Asia, and South America; past President, American Textbook Publishers Institute; delegate to UNESCO conferences; member of U. S. Government Advisory Committee on International Book Programs.
>
> David Kaser: Director of Joint University Libraries, serving Vanderbilt University, Peabody College and Scarritt College in Nashville; Professor of Library Science; Ph.D.; editor of books and periodicals; author of several books on early development of publishing and printing in the United States; participant in CBA/TCR 1966 survey of developmental book activities in South Korea.

Within the short two-week time limit of the study, we were able to investigate many pertinent areas--thanks to the full measure of cooperation and assistance received from the many individuals and agencies who were contacted.

The team is grateful to the members of the staffs of USAID/Laos, USIS/Laos, the IVS Contract Group and The Asia Foundation, who contributed valuable guidance and counsel; to those at the Ministry of Education, who were so helpful; and to other educators, officials, private citizens and businessmen.

Our work in Laos was expedited by the personnel of the Education Division of USAID/Laos. We extend a particularly deep note of thanks to its Director, to the Educational Advisors in its Teacher Training and Educational Materials Branch and its Community Education Branch, and also to the Chief of the USAID Communications Media unit, and the Assistant Director for Manpower of USAID.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

THE NATIONAL SETTING AND INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

The least developed of the countries in the Indochinese peninsula, Laos is a landlocked kingdom of 91,000 square miles whose mountains hinder communication both inside the country and with its neighbors. Four-fifths of the area is rugged jungle; the valleys of the Mekong River and its tributaries comprise the flatlands. The Mekong marks the long boundary with Thailand and is the grand artery of communication in Laos. While frequent rapids have so far prevented large-scale, long-distance shipments, and waterfalls have minimized its international use, the Mekong valley development project, now getting under way, is expected to provide hydroelectric power and a water transportation network far superior to the natural system. But even now, the Mekong is the life stream of Laos: its narrow flood plains form the wet-rice lands; its waters furnish fish--the protein supplement to the universal rice diet; and the Mekong and its tributaries carry the pirogues, sampans, and light barges that transport such freight as moves in the Kingdom.

The independent Kingdom of Laos is only one generation old, dating from the signing of an agreement in 1949 with France, which for over one-half of a century had administered the country as a protectorate. However, the Lao people--the dominant ethnic group politically as well as culturally--trace their history back to their flight south from China and the founding of the Lao Kingdom of Lan Xang in 1353.

It is estimated that the population of Laos is about 2,500,000, although that figure is admittedly a guess, for there never has been a formal census in the country. The median age is thought to be around 20, and a life expectancy at birth is estimated at 30 to 35 years. Average family size is probably between five and six.

Some 95% of the population is rural, living in about 9,000 villages. Vientiane, the capital--like all the larger towns and settlements in the country, on the banks of the Mekong--has a varyingly estimated 50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. The remaining few "cities" are all provincial towns of 4,000 to 15,000 population. Population growth is thought to be around 2% per year. Ethnically, one-half of the population is Lao (concentrated in the Mekong valley) and most of the rest consists of primitive tribes (the Meo, Yao, Black Thai, and Lu--mostly of proto-Malay origin, and the Khas of Indonesian descent) which live in the mountain areas. The non-Lao population is made up mostly of some 30,000 Chinese who are active in commercial pursuits, and a smaller number of Vietnamese. There are in addition perhaps 1,000 individuals of Indian origin (merchants also) and several thousand persons of European origin.

Ethnic Laotians speak Laotian Thai (henceforth called Lao in this report), a language of the Southwestern Thai branch peoples of Sino-Tibetan stock. Lao is closely related to the Thai spoken in Thailand; it has dialects, but the variation is minimal. The Lao alphabet, in all essentials identical with Thai, came into existence about the thirteenth century and is written in several styles or forms. Although the alphabet remains the same, Laotians in different parts of the Kingdom use these different written styles according to their preferences, and there is no standardized spelling. There is, moreover, no one generally accepted system for transcribing the Lao alphabet into Latin letters. During the French protectorate technical terms of French and Cambodian origin were adopted in many instances; since independence Thai technical terms (themselves adaptations or analogues of words in Western languages) tend to be used.

Many literate Lao also have some literacy in French, but the literacy rate, although never accurately determined, is thought to be only about 20%. More and more Laos are learning English as a second language.

The dominant and official faith of Laos is Theravada (Hinayana) Buddhism. In practice, Buddhism overlays a core of spirit worship deeply ingrained in the Lao as well as the hill tribe groups. Despite this mixture, however, Buddhism contains the ideal to which the Lao offers reverence.

Superimposed on the traditional religious and vocational schooling a young Lao receives from the bonzes (monks)--every male Buddhist is supposed to spend some time, however brief, as a novice in the wat (pagoda)--is the secular educational system, closely modeled on the schools introduced by the French. The Lao public school system has had a spectacular growth, and although seriously handicapped by insufficient funds and a shortage of qualified teachers, has made textbooks available to all children in the six primary school grades--through a joint Ministry of Education/USAID project. Secondary schools have minimal enrollments, and higher education must be obtained abroad. The proportion of school age children enrolled in the primary and secondary schools is unknown, but it is estimated that about one-half of first grade age children attend classes, and that about 50% of these are lost after first grade.

Nevertheless quantitatively, and in some respects qualitatively, the Lao educational system has made great strides during the past several years--to a large degree because of foreign assistance. Yet, basic problems remain, as the following excerpt from the excellent book "Laos, Its People, Its Society, Its Culture" points out:

> "Despite encouraging advances, it is apparent that the Laotian school system is inadequate in terms of present national goals and aspirations...(because) the larger and long-range problems of Laotian education are closely tied to the whole socioeconomic

> problem. The social demand for broad educational opportunity does not exist, because the economic system does not as yet provide the impetus to social mobility. And for the economic system to advance to the point where the advantages of such social mobility are apparent, a more broadly educated population is one of the most important prerequisites."*

The country the French found was, as it is today, almost completely agricultural. Following centuries-old patterns, the vast majority of the people of Laos are subsistence wet-rice farmers living in tiny villages along the Mekong and its tributaries or, in the case of the hill tribes, dry-rice farmers leading a seminomadic life based on slash-and-burn cultivation in the highlands. Other important crops include coffee, corn, rubber, cotton, tobacco and spices. Forestry exploitation (mostly teak) is hindered by lack of transport. Industries are limited to light consumer goods, with some cottage and family-type production. Tin mining has been important. Barter is the principal method of exchange; the money economy is limited to "cities," where Chinese merchants dominate trade.

To put Laos on a sound economic basis will require fundamental changes in the structure of the economy and in traditional attitudes. But economic development is difficult in a nation "where farmers still tend to show interest in improved agricultural methods primarily as a means to maintain their subsistence standard of living with less work, where except for very recently trained airplane mechanics and truck drivers skilled labor is almost nonexistent, or where the primitive conditions of much of the road network leaves large areas of the country without land transportation during the rainy season."** (Laos has no railroads.)

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*Laos, Its People, Its Society, Its Culture, edited by Frank M. LeBar and Adrienne Suddard, part of Survey of World Cultures, HRAF Press, New Haven, 1963, page 87. Much of the background information contained in this chapter is summarized from this comprehensive basic work.

**Ibid, page 3.

The large budgetary deficits of the Royal Lao Government are covered entirely by foreign aid which accounts for about 90% of the budgetary revenue. Some revenue is derived from customs duties and taxes. Laos consistently suffers large trade deficits; imports are financed from the Foreign Exchange Operation Fund operated by the U.S., France, the United Kingdom, Australia and Japan. The Fund also controls the circulation of the kip, the local unit of currency. (The legal free market rate approximates 500 kip per U.S. dollar, a conversion ratio that is used throughout this report.)

The continuing large budget deficits are attributed mainly to the clandestine conflict being fought daily in Laos's jungle covered mountains, as a by-product to the conflict in Vietnam. In addition to causing the expenditure of large sums for military purposes, the conflict has seriously affected rice production (many men are under arms) to the extent that Laos is no longer an exporter, but is instead a large importer of rice (from Thailand).

The media of public communication are more primitive in Laos than in most other countries. The effectiveness of the printed word is severely limited by the small size of the literate population; relatively few can read the country's newspapers and other publications. There is a single broadcasting station.

The basic problem of supplying large quantities of developmental and educational materials to Laotians revolves around several factors, including the following.

High degree of illiteracy, and lack of reading habit and tradition among Laotians; consequent lack of an economically viable market in most areas.

Lack of trained Laotians in writing, art work, printing and library development.

Still-changing nature of the Lao language; neither spelling nor terminology are standardized.

Absence of data on the social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth characteristics of children, from which to develop meaningful school curricula and textbooks; absence of trained curriculum development personnel.

Lack of fundamental knowledge of book use and advantages.

Lack of professional publishers, printers and booksellers.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Our two-week survey in Laos cannot hope to do more than identify a limited number of priority needs, problems and opportunities--and suggest answers and solutions within the framework of existing economic, technical, financial and manpower limitations. We list below resumes of more recommendations of the book activities survey team. The number in parentheses after each recommendation indicates the page upon which it appears in the body of the report.

We suggest that the reader use this summary primarily to gain an overall view of the tenor of our recommendations, to obtain an indication of relative priorities, and as a reference index for locating specific recommendations in the text where they are elaborated in fuller detail.

Recommendations Regarding Books and Instructional Materials in the Educational Process

Whatever the arrangement eventually decided on for the funding of reprints of the Educational Materials Development Project primary school textbooks--we recommend that the textbooks continue to be distributed on a one book per pupil, per subject, per grade basis. Only by continuing the original plan can the purposes of the project be fully realized (25).

Within a few short years, Laos has become a country in which, for the first time, all public primary school students have access to and in most cases actually have textbooks. Because of the rarity of the experience and the profound implications the success of the textbook project can have on the educational programs developed by foreign assistance agencies and private foundations in other developing countries--we recommend that the effects of project textbook usage in reducing pupil "wastage" and teacher turnover, in improving pupil achievement and teaching methods, and so forth, be measured and evaluated in depth (26).

We recommend that USAID continue and increase its support to the current and planned word count, scope and sequence studies being undertaken by its Education Division; further, that it commit itself to revising the primary school textbooks immediately after the secondary and teacher training titles have been produced. Because replacement primary school textbooks will be needed long before the revisions can be made available (the current textbooks are even now beginning to wear out) we recommend that USAID provide support to the Ministry of Education for such reprinting--shifting to dollar support if sufficient counterpart funds are unavailable (27).

Development of books and related materials for teachers and teacher instruction in the use of textbooks should be accorded highest priority. The remaining project teachers' manuals should be completed and distributed for school use as soon as possible; in-service training courses to demonstrate to teachers how to use the manuals and textbooks should be instituted; and such instruction should be included in the teacher-training curriculum (27).

To assist the textbook creation process in Laos, we recommend that sets of the University of Pittsburgh-selected CBA/AID "depository" textbook libraries of representative U.S. titles be acquired for resource-reference use by USAID, the English Section of the National Education Center, and/or the Materials Production Center. In addition, that scope and sequence charts for U.S. and other non-Laotian textbooks be obtained; and that long-term production planning and scheduling be considered (28).

We support those who advocate extending the distribution of project primary school textbooks to private schools on an optional basis; further, we urge that steps be taken to improve the Ministry of Education's warehousing and shipping of project textbooks (29).

For the short-term, the editorial, writing, and production staffs of the Materials Production Center should be enlarged and upgraded through workshops, renewed participant training in Thailand, and in on-the-job training with the USAID/University of Hawaii secondary school textbook development team. For the long-term, the MPC eventually will need an editorial director and subject matter editors who combine the knowledge of textbook characteristics with subject matter expertise (32-3).

In addition to the acquisition of the CBA/AID textbook depository library noted above, the reference library of the Materials Production Center should acquire additional representative textbook titles published in France and Canada (Quebec), titles concerned with recent curriculum trends and methods of teaching, and U.S. and other-country teachers' editions and manuals (33).

To meet the immediate need for vocational and technical textbooks in the Lao schools, we urge that appropriate Thai language titles be used, including the textbooks developed for the Thai-German technical schools (36).

Because the small size of secondary school enrollment makes the development of printed textbooks more of an economic than an educational problem--we suggest that long-range requirement projections be made, so that textbooks of quality can be produced at reasonable cost; further, that adaptations of culture-free U.S. secondary school textbooks be considered (35).

When (hopefully in the near future) a total national plan for Laotian higher education is designed to blueprint a single university that will combine into one the present autonomous professional schools--the university plan should coordinate and develop the professional school libraries under the single administrative direction of an experienced librarian who can help assure sound library development. In the meantime, all potential sources of scholarly books should be approached for selective shelf enrichment assistance in the development of the professional libraries that will later constitute divisions of the university library system; and books should be processed and cataloged uniformly, to facilitate their subsequent unification into the single university library system (43-4).

The aims of the proposed textbook approval law are laudatory. However, the contemplated fees for review and approval are so high that they will discourage local initiative. Thus, we recommend that they be reduced drastically (24).

Because of the obvious superiority of the book producing capacity of Lao Photo Presse (and the inadequacy of other printers), it should be selected to undertake the printing of textbooks within Laos. To do this job with suitable efficiency, it will need additional technical and commodity assistance, and technical training; and it should avoid complicated, multicolored books. However, it will be unable to handle more than a fraction of the Kingdom's needs for some years to come; and until that latter time, the USIA Regional Service Center at Manila will have to be relied upon to some degree (69)

Recommendations Concerning Non-School Libraries and Library Development

We suggest that a central library division be established under the Ministry of Education, to coordinate all library matters in the nation. Under the supervision of the new division, a national plan for library development and service should be prepared to include all libraries in any way responsible to the Royal Lao Government. The division, to be headed by a professional librarian, should furnish leadership in all matters of national library concern, including library legislation; development of a professional library association; delineation of a program of library training; compilation of statistics; cataloging and processing techniques; and so forth (60-1).

The Rockefeller Library (known also as the National Library) and the National Archives Library should be combined under the supervision of a librarian, provided adequate funding, placed in better quarters, and developed into a true National Library. It might be located on or near the campus of the proposed university, to provide a single research collection that can serve both as the National Library and the university general library (61).

The National Library should be separated administratively from the National Museum as soon as possible; and planning should begin soon toward the creation of a national bibliography and a national union catalog (61).

Other agencies should supplement as far as possible the plan of The Asia Foundation to help develop ministerial libraries with donations of pertinent Thai, English and French language books (57).

Although the help of foreign entities should be sought for assistance in library development, the Royal Lao Government must be aware that continuing education through libraries as well as schools is a national responsibility (62).

There is need for a better understanding of book preservation problems and principles under monsoon climatic conditions, to prevent earlier-than-normal disintegration; a Lao bookbindery should be established (62).

Recommendations Regarding the Development and Encouragement of Reading Skills

Excellent materials for the development and encouragement of reading skills are being prepared by foreign donor agencies, but the need goes far beyond present capabilities. To increase further the flow of useful materials, we suggest that appropriate Thai books, pamphlets and periodicals be procured; and that writers' workshops be considered (55).

The "cluster library" concept should be expanded, and modest community reading rooms should be established in the *groupes scolaires* as rapidly as possible. However, the collections in the *groupes scolaires* should not be limited to children's level materials, but also should embrace simple reading texts in Lao and Thai addressed to an adult interest level, as well as Thai and Lao pamphlets, illustrated magazines and newspapers; and the utilization as a rudimentary public library service should be encouraged (52 and 54).

The mobile library concept might be adopted to bring reading materials to the smaller villages around the cluster libraries and the community reading rooms in the *groupes scolaires* (56).

To coordinate and render still more effective the efforts of foreign agencies to develop materials for new readers at all levels--we suggest the establishment of a multi-agency-funded service center to prepare such materials under the direction of an experienced foreign writing or editorial specialist (56).

An anthropologist using a tape recorder should collect stories from among those in the Kingdom's rich oral tradition, for use as source material for authors of children's books and magazine articles (56).

CHAPTER 2

BOOKS IN THE LAO SCHOOLS

To all intents and purposes, the educational market* is the only market for books in Laos. The Lao book industry is embryonic and its publishing element is almost exclusively governmental. Lao books are not produced for commercial purposes; the few bookstores (they can be counted on the fingers of both hands) concentrate on foreign titles. In early 1967, three dozen non-textbooks were in print in the Kingdom. According to UNESCO 1964 statistics, only 29,000 volumes--4% of those produced in the country--were not textbooks; the other 750,000 volumes were textbooks.

This chapter covers various aspects of books in the Lao school system. It begins with a discussion of the primary school textbook project which will have provided 2,500,000 textbooks (mostly printed outside the country) by the end of fiscal 1968. Then, in turn, it covers the Ministry of National Education's Materials Production Center, instructional materials in secondary education and in teacher training, and materials in the few Lao educational institutions with higher education components. The chapter concludes with a footnote on the languages of instruction in Lao schools, and the educational direction in which they appear to be leading.

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*See Appendix A, "Education in Laos", for details on the nature, composition and trends of this market.

TEXTBOOKS FOR THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Origin and Status of the Elementary School Materials Production Project

An educational materials survey completed by USAID Advisor, Francis H. Vittetow, in early 1964 revealed that (a) there were almost no primary school textbooks in the Lao language to support the Education Reform Act of 1962; (b) there were no teacher guides to give direction to textbooks or classroom procedures; (c) no planned approach was being utilized to eliminate fragmentary supply patterns of supplementary materials; (d) there was no leadership program at the provincial and national levels in materials development; (e) there was no professional library to support writing or curriculum development; and (f) there was no habitable place in the Ministry of Education for materials development personnel to work. In the absence of textbooks, teachers had to copy lessons from their notebooks to blackboard so a pupil could, in turn, copy from blackboard to notebook.

The lack of materials in the Lao school structure is not of recent origin. It persisted during the French rule of Laos* and had continued since independence in 1949. With an insufficiency of blackboards and overcrowded classrooms, the instructional process was as tedious as it was nonproductive.

In his End-of-Tour Report, Mr. Vittetow noted: "Teachers can be trained, buildings can be built, better administrative and supervisory approaches considered, but all of these will be to no avail until a child has something to read and study. Until this basic, and critical, material shortage is resolved to the satisfaction of pupil and teacher, the Lao schools will continue to participate in a 'professional exercise' without too much meaning."

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*Reprints of a few French language primary schoolbooks that date back to those days still are produced for some private schools, and are reportedly also used in a number of public schools. Those we saw were simple, one-color paperback primers and readers that have remained unchanged in some cases for decades. A 64-page primer printed on newsprint was priced at 40 _kip_ (8¢); a 248-page reader for _pratom_ 6B, printed on wood free paper, was priced at 360 _kip_ (72¢).

As a result of the 1964 study, USAID with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education developed a project to provide textbooks and supplementary materials in the Lao language to support primary education. This has since been expanded to include secondary and vocational education, as well as teacher training.) Project objectives have been:

1. To provide 2,500,000 textbooks for pupils in pratom 1-6, representing 75 titles--one for each subject in each grade. Books to be distributed free of charge to the pupils in public primary schools.

2. To print books of a bulletin type and of uniform size, 6"x9". Format to be standard, including the picture of the King of Laos. Outside back cover to contain a map of Laos and adjacent regions. All covers to be in four colors with content in two colors.

3. To provide teacher guides to accompany classroom textbooks.

4. To provide each classroom with some supplementary materials such as maps, charts and pictures.

5. To provide training programsfor writers and materials development personnel at the provincial and national levels.

6. To provide a professional library for writers at the Materials Production Center of the Ministry of Education. Reference sources to be in Lao, English, French and Thai languages.

7. To provide for renovation of the Materials Production Center to include new rooms for writers, director artists, new wiring, painting, and an audio-visual projection room.

Former Primary School Inspectors (PSI's) were hired on a crash basis for the Materials Production Center to translate and/or adapt the books from French. In view of the urgent need for the textbooks, no preliminary scope and sequence work was done; nor was there considered to be time for a word count study. Because of inadequate printing facilities within Laos, cooperation was elicited from the USIA Regional Service Center in Manila, and camera-ready copy was transmitted there on a regular basis. In an effort to develop local book capability within Laos, local printers recently have been provided the opportunity to produce some of the books. (We discuss local capability in Chapter 4.) USAID's project contribution has included payment for textbook production in Manila and in Vientiane*, and payment of salaries for most of the Materials Production Staff engaged in writing or translating the books.

Under a crash program of book creation and production, the first project textbooks began to reach the Lao primary schools by the end of 1964. At the time of our survey in February-March, 1967, 53 of the 75 student edition titles had been printed and received; the remainder were in various stages of planning or production. All but two of the completed titles had been printed by the USIA Regional Service Center; nine of the 27 remaining student edition and teachers' manual titles were being printed or were scheduled to be printed in Laos (see Table 1 for details). Only three project books had been printed in Laos as of February 1967: the lavishly illustrated four-color offset Geography P4 textbook, produced by the Service Géographique National; the History P1 textbook, and the pratom (grade) 1 Teachers' Manual--both printed by the private firm, Phone Presse. In all, about 2,000,000 of the primary school textbooks had been received by that date.

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*The printers' bids include paper costs; they procure paper on their own. At the time of our survey, USAID had not yet imported U.S. paper for local printing, although it was exploring a method by which paper from the United States might be imported in bulk and at a competitive cost through commercial channels.

Table 1

STATUS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEXTBOOK PRODUCTION, EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
(as of February 1967)

Grade and Quantity Ordered	Grade 1 (96,000)	Grade 2 (37,000)	Grade 3 (28,000)	Grade 4 (20,000)	Grade 5 (14,000)	Grade 6 (13,000)	Ungraded
Reading	M+(M)	M	M	M	M	(M)	-
Science	M	M	M	M	M	M	-
History	L	(M)	(M)	(M)	(M)	(M)	-
Hygiene	M	M	M	M	M	M	-
Geography	M	M	M	L	M	(M)	-
Ethics	M	M	M	M	M	M	-
Arithmetic	M	M	M	(M)	(M)	(M)	-
Home Economics	M	M	M	M	(M)	(M)	-
Gardening	M	M	M	<-----	M	----->	-
Civics	(L)	(M)	(M)	(L)	(L)	(L)	-
Youth Movement	-	M	M	M	M	M	-
Music	-	-	-	(M)	(M)	(M)	-
Poetry	-	-	-	M	M	M	-
Lao Fables	-	-	-	M	M	M	
History of Buddha	<-----	M	----->	<-----	M	----->	-
Teachers' Manuals	L*	(L)*	(L)*	(L)*	(L)*	(L)*	-
Mother & Child Care	-	-	-	-	-	-	M**
First Aid	-	-	-	-	-	-	M*

Notes: Sites where printed are indicated by letters:
M = Manila (at USIA Regional Service Center)
L = Laos

Letters without parentheses indicate that the printed volumes have been received; letters with parentheses indicate that titles were in planning or production stage, or had been printed but not yet received.
* = 5,000 copies; ** = 25,000 copies

Source: USAID/Education Division

The project textbooks are paperbacks printed on wood free paper; their theoretical life expectancy is three years. In order to compensate for loss and damage during that period, and also to take care of increasing enrollments, the student editions have been overprinted from 28% to 78%:*

Grade	Pupils 4/1/66	# Copies Printed per Title	Overrun
Pratom 1	67,008	96,000	43%
Pratom 2	28,807	37,000	28%
Pratom 3	20,895	28,000	34%
Pratom 4	12,115	20,000	65%
Pratom 5	8,298	14,000	70%
Pratom 6	7,279	13,000	78%

Since the textbooks had been in the schools for only 1-2 years before our survey, there was no way of telling whether the books would indeed last for three years in the subtropical Laotian climate. At the schools we visited, all students had textbooks and the books were well protected. The textbooks were covered with newspaper or similar wrapping, and most children had inexpensive book bags.**

The textbooks are brought home by pupils who are given homework assignments in the books. Their presence in the home has dramatized two points. On one hand, they affect parental attitude toward learning and reading in a positive manner: for the first time many parents can browse through colorful, easy-to-read books in a home situation; in this way they can learn of the importance of mosquito netting and soap from the hygiene book, and learn a little of their country from the history and geography books, etc. On the other hand, the project textbooks point up the lack of reading materials for children outside of the school; there were 10 works of literature in print in Laos during our study--none of these at a primary school level. Students interested in supplementary reading had to turn to one of the few magazines or leaflets available in the Kingdom.

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*The percentages shown are somewhat inflated. Two thousand copies of each printing are supposed to be shipped to the teacher training schools so that the students there can learn how to use textbooks in instruction.

**Parents often have good reason to see that their children care for textbooks. In some schools deposits are required before the books are lent to parents free of charge. (The deposits are a kind of security payment to guarantee safe return.) We were told that sometimes the deposit is not returned at the end of the school year. In other schools teachers are held accountable for the books.

Table 1 shows that one teachers' manual is to be published for each primary school grade. Each manual covers in abbreviated form all the student editions in a single grade. It is aimed at teachers with six years of education and minimal previous use of books. While the manual is devoted mainly to instruction in the use of the new textbooks, graphics and teaching aids, it also discusses characteristics of each subject in the curriculum, and what materials best can be adapted to teaching that subject.

The teachers' manual for pratom 1 was on the press during our survey. After an initial delay caused by lack of personnel at the Materials Production Center (MPC), it and the manual for pratom 2 were written in English by Ralph H. Hall, USAID/Materials Production Advisor and Teacher Education Advisor, and subsequently reviewed and translated into Lao by a committee. The pratom 2 manual was scheduled to go to printing in March 1967. The manuals for pratom 3 and pratom 4 were being written by USAID advisors during our visit, and were to be reviewed and translated by Primary School Inspectors; the manuals were to be inexpensively duplicated so that advance copies could be rushed out to the teachers. Five thousand copies of each manual were to be printed; of these 1,000 or so were to be sent to the teacher training schools, the rest to the primary schools.

During fiscal 1966, design and production of a few simple supplementary materials were started at the Materials

Production Center,* and the MPC's reference library was improved by the importation of additional professional books in elementary education. The project, by the time of our visit, had also provided training in Thailand for 16 employees (including five writers) of the MPC in various techniques involved in materials production and textbook manuscript preparation. The Center's Director also attended an AID/CBA-sponsored book industry seminar in New York City.

Results and Future of the Educational Materials Production Project

Although there is as yet no tangible proof that the use of the primary school textbooks has improved instruction, reading ability and school grades--teachers and Ministry of Education and USAID officials believe that the pupils (and in many cases their siblings and parents, too) have benefited. The lack of quantitative and qualitative proof results both from the lack of pertinent records in the Laotian school system and the newness of the books in the instructional context. The dropout or student "wastage" problem probably was not alleviated appreciably during the two years after the initial appearance of the books in the classes, but other factors--economic, social, biological, and educational--are possibly more basic causes of the "wastage" problem, and they are far less susceptible to short-term solution.**

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*Because of its relatively low priority, the audio-visual component of the project had not developed very far by February 1967. However, a summer (1967) in-service workshop on the making of teaching materials had been planned for 60 new and 100 active teachers. The flash cards, charts and graphics to be produced within the context of the project will be coordinated with the textbooks. The MPC is discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

**These causative factors are discussed in detail in Appendix A.

When the last of the project primary school textbooks has been printed and distributed to the schools, one book will be available to each pupil for each subject in each grade. However, although USAID officials notified the survey team that the Mission's support for the primary textbook phase of the project would end at that point (it will transfer its attention to the development of textbooks for secondary and teacher training students)--the program will have to be maintained in some way by someone. As the primary school textbooks begin even now to be lost and to wear out, enrollments are increasing rapidly--if not by the 13% of recent years--by at least 8% per annum. Under such conditions the textbook overrun is rapidly melting away. This raises the question of whether the books should be reprinted "as is" or whether they first should be revised, and then reprinted. It also raises the allied questions of who will pay for the new books and how they can be produced most efficiently.

By the beginning of 1968 (and probably sooner), the first replacement textbooks will have to be on hand in larger quantities than the original editions. Almost all the first edition books have been printed at the Manila Regional Service Center with USAID funding, and future books are scheduled to be produced in Laos by a "revitalized" local book industry. Even with this program, the local industry still lacks the necessary capability,* and USAID reports that it must concentrate its relatively limited supply of local currency in other, higher priority areas (e.g., agriculture) if an appreciable impact is to be made anywhere. The Ministry of Education, which lacked the money to provide the first editions of the textbooks, also lacks the money to pay for reprinting them in Laos, even should local capability miraculously be developed in time. The impasse continues as the primary school textbooks wear out.

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*For the most part, presses are primitive, binding equipment is unknown, printing know-how is minimal, few firms have standards, knowledge of how to do color separation, etc. See Chapter 4.

A further point of contention is whether pedagogically the textbooks are worth reprinting, unless they are first revised. We noted previously that the original titles were produced with outstanding rapidity and skill because of the urgency of the situation, but that they were "written" (more often translated from the French) by unskilled ex-educators without much advance preparation. Mr. Vittetow originally anticipated that revisions of the present primary textbooks would be started by the end of fiscal 1968, that about 12 books per year would be revised over a five-year period, and that the books would be printed in Vientiane. Dr. Hall's group has begun the scope, sequence and word count studies that are required if the textbooks are to be transformed into more effective instructional tools; the initial studies were scheduled to be completed by the end of Summer 1967.

Some at USAID maintain that--if sufficient funding can be obtained for primary textbook assistance--U.S. aid should be limited only to new books in which these studies and U.S. expertise can make substantive contributions. Others feel that the time (early 1969) is too short and human resources too limited to develop such books--even if money were available. A USAID Education Advisor considered the problem in the course of a memo to the team; he wrote:

> "A father in Laos is unable to buy books for his children, since they do not exist. Within the past two years books have been provided to elementary schools. Teachers do not know how to use them wisely. But anyway, the pupils have books of their own and many see for the first time a map of Laos, or a picture of their king. The books are not perfect, but they are a beginning, probably far better than we had (in the U.S. 50 years ago). All books were written by former teachers, although admittedly they knew little about scientific textbook writing. The (MPC) committee members could not agree among themselves on how to say something in Lao, because the Lao language has been used so little. Regardless of differences in wording and mistakes, there have been few criticisms, because the Lao were writing books for Lao children (for the first time). They were entitled to make mistakes.

> "Here is my suggestion about these books. They were printed in Manila for an average of 12½¢ each. We have the plates and they could be reprinted much cheaper. I suggest that twice the original number be reprinted, mistakes and all. That once a child has used a book, he be permitted to take it home and keep it as his own. By the time he completes the sixth grade he will have (75) books of his own that he and his family will use over and over. The cost of this would be infinitesimal compared with the cost of one bomber...
>
> "In the meantime I think that USAID should bring together all the persons who have written books (in Laos), or are interested in doing so, and help them learn how to revise the books now used. This could be a working conference lasting one or two years, with special advisors. We would probably have to pay their salaries, but so what? By that time the books revised according to best practices would be ready for reprinting."

This concept would, of course, require a reversal of USAID attitude.

In the absence of available funds for the replacement of primary school textbooks, the Ministry of Education and USAID were beginning to consider various subsidized sale formats, under which parents eventually would pay a portion (or all) of the book costs. Discussion centered on the advisability of instituting a special school fee to include textbooks, or a separate fee for books alone.

French Language Books and Miscellaneous Considerations

Before 1945, all primary grades were taught in French, and the instructional materials used were in that language. Over the years the French component has decreased. After World War II, Lao became the language of instruction in _pratom_ 1 and 2. In the early 1950's, Lao was extended to _pratom_ 3; and by the early 1960's, instruction in the Second Cycle of primary school (_pratom_ 4-6) became Laotianized, while retaining a strong French component. The

Ministry anticipates that by 1980 all education (through secondary school at least) will be in Lao. The gradual phase-out of French will be slow, in part because of the need to train Laotians to replace French instructors who predominate at the secondary level.

At the time of the developmental book survey, the free and universally available Lao language project textbooks to a large degree had replaced the few books--both in French and Lao--that had been used previously in the public schools. Nevertheless, because a prime aim of pratom 4-6 is to prepare the Laotian student for the French language secondary schools (from six to eight hours per week are spent in the upper primary classes studying that language), French language books are still sometimes used.* In urban areas where the teacher can speak French, he often uses that language for instruction even though his students use the Lao language textbooks. (To facilitate this bilingual approach, many project textbooks contain French language summaries at the end of each chapter.) In rural areas where the teacher is usually not French-fluent, instruction remains almost exclusively Lao, and graduates from such pratom 6 classes usually are required to undergo a year of intensive French instruction (Classe 6B) before proceeding higher in secondary school.

It is important to note that the Lao language project textbooks are not the only approved primary schoolbooks. A number of French language textbooks qualify and are used by teachers in some public schools and by students and teachers primarily in the French or French-oriented primary schools. French language original versions of the project Geography P4, P5 and P6 textbooks were being printed in Canada in 10,000-copy editions during early 1967. French-fluent teachers seek French instructional aids, and we noted several such instructors using a French language Histoire P4 teachers' edition (it contains the text of the student edition, plus numerous teacher-directed references explaining how the book should be used); the teachers' edition was written by Guy Marimot of the staff of the National Education Center (ESP) at Vientiane, and was published by the French Cultural Mission to Laos through Casa Lao. The 196-page book was printed in simple black-and-white offset on wood free paper, and was saddle-wired. It reportedly was priced at 340 kip (68¢), but the copies we saw were stamped "Gift of the French Government." The book was used in many schools, although it had not previously received Ministry clearance.

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*Some observers claim that such heavy emphasis is spent on teaching pupils French in many pratom 4, 5 and 6 classes--and in the first two years of secondary school--that little else is learned.

Partially as a result of the Histoire P4, the Ministry of Education had, shortly before our arrival, developed a proposal establishing a formal schoolbook approval process. Modeled after the Thai textbook approval law, it recommends that (a) books used in the schools must first receive official Ministry authorization "for the sake of maintaining the good level of education"; (b) that publishers pay 400 kip (80¢) per page for science and mathematics texts and 300 kip (60¢) per page for other books as a service fee to cover the cost of reviewing ("censuring") the manuscripts; and (c) that they pay an additional 5% of the selling price in advance as an issuance fee. While the aim is laudatory, the extremely high fees involved (far higher than for Thai books*) will inevitably discourage local initiative. We recommend that the contemplated charges be reduced drastically.

The Ministry of Education has a daily radio program for pupils of pratom 1-3. The Japanese Government donated 450 radios for this purpose; the Australian Government is expected to provide many more. We found few receivers in sight or in use; many are inoperative and spare parts are not available.

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*For further details on the Thai schoolbook approval process and service fee system, see pages 18-21 of Developmental Book Activities and Needs in Thailand, Wolf Management Services, New York, August 1967.

Recommendations Re Primary School Textbooks

One of the most exciting projects we have encountered in our East Asia book surveys is the elementary school textbook program of the Ministry of Education and USAID. On the basis of our knowledge of this program, we submit a few recommendations for its future:

1. Textbooks for All Pupils. For the future funding of the primary textbook phase of this project, we recommend that, whatever plan is adopted, the textbooks continue to be distributed on a per-pupil basis. The plan may provide for USAID to phase out gradually on printing and commodity support as the local communities or the Ministry assume each year an increasing share; or it may provide for a total withdrawal of such support on a scheduled date. Whatever the eventual plan for financing production may be, we recommend that it continue to provide a textbook for each subject in each grade in which the pupil is enrolled. Only by carrying out such a plan can the original purposes of the project be achieved: a more efficient use of the teachers' and the pupils' time; replacement of the didactic method of teaching by problem-solving and classroom discussion; improvement of the teaching of inadequately trained teachers by providing them with textbooks, teachers' manuals and teaching aids; and use of textbooks as a means of unifying the nation.

Since these objectives are much more likely to be reached if all the pupils have books, it is in the interests of the Royal Lao Government, USAID and the local communities to supply and/or subsidize the books rather than to place the full financial load for their purchase on the parents.

In the current state of Laotian economic development, distribution that depends on pupil and parent purchase of the textbooks will mean that there will be few classrooms, if any, where all pupils have books; and many, if not all, where only a few pupils and perhaps none will have textbooks. As a result, the teacher will revert to the method of writing the "textbook" on the blackboard for the pupils to copy in their notebooks, with the net effect that the benefit of the project will be dissipated quickly. For the project objectives to be realized, the textbooks should be in the hands of all the pupils.

2. Evaluation of the Textbook Project. Laos is exceptional among developing countries in that all the pupils attending public primary schools have access to and in most cases actually have textbooks. If textbooks can be shown to have raised the level of education in Laos, dissemination of this information should have an important influence on the textbook programs of other countries. For that reason, we recommend that the Education Division of USAID set up a systematic procedure for the evaluation of the project. Although evaluation cannot easily take the form of experimental and control groups, perhaps it can include the effect on the number of dropouts, on teacher turnover, on teaching methods, on pupil achievement, on pupil attitude toward school, and on the reading habits of school-leavers.

We realize that this evaluation cannot be conducted in a vacuum and that, as previously noted, other more persistent (and perhaps more basic) factors influence student "wastage" and teacher turnover. Because of the complex nature of the research required, we thus suggest that a research specialist or a qualified staff member of the Education Division undertake the assignment from the development of procedure through the data analysis phases.

For all foreign assistance agencies and private foundations involved in educational programs in countries where pupils are entirely or partially without textbooks, the measurable results from the textbook project should have significant implications. Therefore, these other foreign agencies and foundations might also provide financial and/or technical assistance for the evaluation.

3. Continuing Support for the Elementary Textbook Project. The MOE/USAID primary school textbooks are beginning to wear out. Although the word count, and scope and sequence studies have been started, their completion and the subsequent revision of the textbooks are several years distant--even if USAID resumes support in the primary school textbook area after the secondary and teacher training textbook phases of the project are finished. In the meantime, replacement books will be needed.

We recommend that USAID continue and increase its support to the word count, scope and sequence studies. Further that USAID make a definite commitment to revise the primary school textbooks immediately after the secondary and teacher training titles have been produced. (Recommendation 5 below contains a number of preplanning suggestions regarding the proposed revisions.)

Because replacement primary school textbooks will be needed long before the revisions can be made available, we recommend that USAID provide some support to the MOE for the reprinting, as is, of needed primary school textbooks. If the lack of available counterpart funds proves a hindrance, we recommend that the USAID printing and commodity support be provided in dollars.

4. Training Teachers to Use Textbooks. Development of books and related materials for teachers, and teacher instruction in the use of textbooks should be accorded highest priority. Few teachers have received the necessary training to be self-sufficient without teachers' manuals. Even those who have attended teacher training schools have not had the opportunity to use textbooks previously, and don't know how to use them effectively. This situation is compounded by the presence of over 1,000 emergency instructors (village volunteers and monks, who do not even meet minimum requirements) swelling the "teacher" rolls.

(a) USAID Education Advisors and some Primary School Inspectors are writing grade manuals, which incorporate textbook references. Those for pratom 1-4, which [illegible]re already written or being written, should be sent [illegible] the schools as soon as possible. The manuals for [illegible]atom 5 and 6 also should be expedited.

(b) There should be instituted in-service training courses to demonstrate to teachers how to use the grade manuals, and how to use the primary school textbooks. Perhaps this can best be done by selecting top teachers in each province, providing them with training in using the project books, and employing them as consultants and as teacher demonstrators.

(c) Courses at the teacher training schools should include instruction in the use of the manuals and textbooks, and the graduating students should be presented with complete sets of both for their own use.

5. Textbook Revision Program. We noted above that we consider the revision of the current primary school textbooks to be a necessary part of a continuing MOE/USAID textbook program. For consideration in planning the necessary revisions (and in the creation of the secondary and teacher training textbooks), we suggest these possibilities.

(a) That the Textbook Division of USAID acquire the "depository" textbook library of representative U.S. elementary and secondary school textbooks sponsored by Central Book Activities/AID/Washington, and selected by the University of Pittsburgh. This library might serve the purpose not only of the Textbook Division, but also of the English Section of the ESP and of the Materials Production Center.

For the most efficient use of these libraries, it might be wise to acquire more than one set, depending on where the libraries are to be located.

The secondary library at ESP would serve two purposes: as a resource for secondary schoolbook development teams, and as examination copies for the English section of the ESP.

(b) Non-Laotian scope and sequence charts and recent elementary courses of study provide another valuable resource. We shall seek the cooperation of the American Textbook Publishers Institute in securing scope and sequence charts of textbooks in print from publishers for USAID.

(c) With the completion of the word list now being compiled by USAID, potential authors and editors will have an indispensable tool for preparing carefully graded primary school textbooks, especially in spelling and reading. If the Materials Production Advisor should require additional staff to complete this project on schedule, we recommend that it be supplied, if necessary on a short-term basis.

(d) Once the future of the elementary textbook phase of the Educational Materials Production Project is decided affirmatively, the development of a five-year publication plan will provide guidelines for MPC staff requirements, for relating printing needs to local capability, and for scheduling revisions and new titles--and thus provide an efficiently scheduled work load and publishing outline.

(e) For the consideration of the Advisor in the event that the current primary school titles are reprinted, we suggest plate patch revisions of selected titles be made. This is an inexpensive, speedy means of correcting errors, of keeping the titles abreast of recent events, and of reducing costs by amortizing the capital investment (plate and editorial costs) over as large a number of printings as possible before making the complete revisions that require resetting the type.

Several of the current titles would benefit from minor revisions. By informing the teachers of the revisions, and by advising them on procedures, they can use both the old and the new editions in the same class.

(f) For the improvement of future primary school textbooks, a workshop might be conducted for the staff of the MPC on the characteristics of modern textbooks and their role in the educational process.

6. Extending the Use of Textbooks to Private Schools. Since one of the purposes of the primary school textbook program is to help to unify Laos through common learning, and another purpose is to give each pupil the advantage of having textbooks to study, both objectives would be strengthened if the textbooks could be distributed to pupils in the private schools on the same basis as they are to pupils in public schools. In making this suggestion, we would assume that the policy would not be compulsory, but would be optional on the part of the private schools.

7. Distribution. During our interviews we were told that the books were slow in getting out of the warehouse.

Although we are aware that the Division of Education has many higher priority problems than the warehousing and packaging of textbooks, this one, if neglected, can become a real bottleneck. We suggest that the situation be investigated and improved. Books that are available but not in the hands of the pupils who need them are of no value.

THE MATERIALS PRODUCTION CENTER

Two entities of the Ministry of National Education publish books. One is the *Comité Littéraire* (Literary Committee), a kind of Académie Laotienne which publishes Lao belles lettres and religious books in moderate numbers. Of more direct importance to this study is the the *Bureau des Manuels Scolaires*, or *Materials Production Center*, which is active in the publishing of textbooks for the Lao schools.

The Materials Production Center (MPC) is the largest of four units under the Ministry's Technical Division (see Figure 1 on page 79); others are (a) the Audio-Visual Aids Office, (b) the Informational Office--which prepares the educational radio broadcasts and a teachers' magazine, and (c) the Statistical Office.

The MPC has been faced with limited budgetary support; during 1964-1966, its total three-year budget was 3,840,000 *kip* ($7,680), of which 65% covered personnel services and the remaining 35% ($2,700) was for materials and equipment. At that, the MPC budget has represented an advance. Until the primary school textbook project had spurred interest in the local development of educational and teaching materials on a national scale, there was no MPC as such--previously prepared materials had been developed on an *ad hoc* basis.

Foreign assistance--primarily U.S.--has augmented the slender resources of the Center. While USAID contributed most of the foreign aid to the MPC (paying the salary of its Director and many of its staff, and as previously noted, providing training in Thailand for writers and other employees and in the United States for its Director, supplying books for resource and reference, etc.), the United Nations and UNESCO each have furnished one full-time advisor to work in the Center. The Asia Foundation has financed the printing of a pratom 1 arithmetic book, and has provided a training grant and printing equipment. The United Kingdom has furnished some radio broadcasting equipment and the services of a materials production technician; and Canada supplied 20 tons of book paper to the Ministry of Education to be used in local printing of several manuscripts developed at the Center.

The Materials Production Center has an old and inadequate textbook reference collection of French, Thai and English titles. Its printing equipment consists of two small multilith presses, plus some meager camera equipment. During our survey, USAID was contemplating the strengthening of MPC's printing capacity by the addition of a half-sheet press; on such equipment the MPC would be able to print runs of experimental material in quantities of 1,000 or so for testing in the schools.

The occasional outside book manuscripts submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval are reviewed by an MPC committee, composed of former school supervisors and inspectors. In such cases, the manuscripts are purchased for a flat 20,000 kip ($40) fee. The Ministry receives all rights; the author receives no additional payment if the book is reprinted and/or revised. Because of the absence of a financial incentive (the fee is a ceiling figure) outside authors, even if theoretically qualified, shy away from writing textbooks.

Thus, almost all of the books published by the Ministry are written by MPC staffers--the retired supervisors and inspectors mentioned above. This writing staff (except for those sent for short-term training to Bangkok by USAID) lacks relevant experience; new titles, including the project primary school textbooks, are usually adapted and occasionally simply translated from French language textbooks in the MPC library. The UNESCO production materials specialist assigned to the MPC, however, plays an important supplemental role; he has written 25% to 30% of the primary textbook titles (in French that is subsequently translated by Lao staffers), and assists the MPC writing staff in its other adaptation/translation efforts ...efforts that are hampered by a lack of agreement among Laos concerning proper Laotian terminology. There is no one authoritative, accepted form of Laotian.

The MPC has semiskilled personnel who type the accepted text and prepare the dummy for printing. Staff illustrators are either Thai or Lao. The Center does not normally print textbooks; most, as noted above, have been printed by the USIA Regional Service Center in Manila, and future books are to be printed at the Service Géographique and/or private Vientiane printers.

It is obvious that the Materials Production Center will have to improve its editorial capability and production capability if it is to become an effective force in a Lao developmental book effort:

1. Editorial and Production Capability

For the short term, the editorial and writing staff of the MPC should be enlarged and upgraded through renewed participant training in Thailand and on-the-job training with the textbook creation team for secondary school-teacher training, soon to begin work in the University of Hawaii contract group at the National Education Center (ESP).

From the long-term point of view, the MPC will eventually need an editorial staff consisting of an editorial director and subject matter editors who combine the knowledge of the characteristics of modern textbooks with the knowledge of a subject matter specialist. Thus a good reading editor should be knowledgeable about methods of teaching reading and also about the way textbooks should be organized for learning and teaching, etc. In the United States, for example, publishers hire subject matter specialists to be editors and train them on the job. The MPC editors cannot be trained overnight. Assuming that the language barrier is eliminated, they can be trained by the USAID or University of Hawaii contract editorial advisors, by participant training in the United States, and in workshops for editors.

By adding production expertise to its staff, the MPC can both improve the quality of its output and effect many economies. Assistance in this area might be obtained from the USAID Communications Media division.

2. Resource Library

The MPC reference library should be expanded by new acquisitions, including:

(a) An elementary and secondary level "depository" textbook library. The value of this CBA/AID collection of leading titles published in the United States (and discussed above under primary school recommendations) would, of course, depend upon the English language ability of MPC's writing staff.

(b) Representative titles of textbooks recently published in France, Quebec, Belgium and other Francophone areas.

(c) Titles concerned with recent curriculum trends and methods of teaching.

(d) Teachers' editions and manuals to accompany textbooks published in the United States and elsewhere.

3. A Workshop for Writers and Editors

With the assistance of the USAID Instructional Materials Advisor and the textbook creation staff to be developed during the secondary and teacher training textbook phase of the Educational Materials Production project, a workshop or series of workshops for the MPC writing staff might be conducted covering (a) the role of textbooks in education; (b) the characteristics of modern textbooks; (c) the planning of a textbook series; (d) teachers' editions; and (e) supporting materials for textbooks.

BOOKS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING

Secondary School Books

In 1966, a total of 4,165 students were registered in the 14 lycées and collèges of Laos. Since the language of instruction in these secondary schools is French, educational and instructional materials are also in that language. The secondary level books are standard French textbooks, printed in France, and they follow the standard French curriculum; some are provided by the French Cultural Mission and some are imported by the Royal Lao Government (reportedly at a special, low price). In most instances, the textbooks are lent to the students (especially in the case of scholarship recipients and of provincial secondary schools). In the Lycée Pavié at Vientiane, the largest by far of the schools (1,745 secondary school students--42% of the Kingdom's total), textbooks are lent to the Lao students who have scholarships; some non-scholarship students rent textbooks; and many--perhaps one-third--buy them.

In the sciences, mathematics and other specialized subjects, the imported textbooks comprise the sole textual materials. In some areas--history, geography and philosophy--mimeographed supplements to the European-oriented French texts are prepared (also in French) by instructors at the Lycée Pavié, and approved by the Ministry. These simple supplements cover Southeast Asia and its constituent nations in greater detail than can be found in the foreign printed texts; in time it is anticipated that various separate supplements will be gathered together and printed as a whole, locally.

The problem of local production revolves primarily around the small size of the secondary school market. During 1966 only 82 secondary school graduates received the Baccalauréat II diploma (which enabled them to attend an institution of higher learning overseas, there being none in Laos). With 323, 170 and 123 students enrolled, respectively, in the last three grades of secondary school, it can be seen that the local publishing of textbooks to cover such a market could not be economically viable.

The Ministry of Education plans to convert the French language secondary schools into Lao language institutions by 1980. Under a contract with USAID, the University of Hawaii is to assist the Ministry to develop the first Lao language secondary school. At the time of our survey, the University was shortly scheduled to begin initial curriculum and instructional materials development.

The secondary textbook development program will take place at the National Education Center (ESP). The first books will be written by University of Hawaii-Lao teams, duplicated in mimeograph form, tested, revised and finally printed. The team is to develop the books one grade at a time, taking about one year for each set of textbooks, and completing its work in five years. The University of Hawaii team will include short-term specialists for specific areas, such as textbook layout, design and editorial development.

Unlike the primary school textbooks produced under the MOE/USAID project, the Lao language secondary school textbooks are not expected to be translations of existing foreign works. Rather, they will be created probably by single authors (not by writing committees) because of the lack of the trained human resource. It is planned that the secondary books will cover all basic subjects for the academic secondary schools. In the light of the lack of publishing, printing and writing skills, the new program will proceed in small, gradual steps. Concurrently with the curriculum and textbook creation efforts, Lao teachers will have to be trained to staff the new school, and that cannot be done overnight either.

The development of printed secondary school textbooks is a problem less of education than of economics. The essential question is how textbooks of quality can be produced for the small number of students enrolled in the schools at a cost that is reasonable. With this in mind, the director of the secondary school textbook project might develop five and ten year projections of the annual printing requirements for each title being prepared. In addition to the number of copies required each year for each subject, the projection would contain estimates of the number of words and illustrations for each title. With the specifications defined, a study of costs could then be made for textbooks printed by different processes, including multigraph and planograph. Both USAID's Instructional Materials Advisor and its Communications Media Advisor have had relevant book production experience that will enable them to assist in this planning.

The secondary school textbook development team might consider the possibility of translating and adapting U.S. textbooks--especially in such subjects as business education, industrial education, mathematics and science; for these books it might be possible to secure repro-plates of illustrations from the publishers at nominal cost.

To date, the three technical collèges have remained untouched by textbook projects; the schools, responsible for developing skills urgently needed in Laotian national growth, lack written instructional tools. The 1,000 or so students enrolled in the technical collèges represent an even smaller market for the creation of Lao textbooks than do the students in the academic schools. As one way to meet the immediate need, we recommend that the Lao-German Technical Collège be permitted to use the excellent Thai translations of West German vocational books used in similar schools in Thailand; since one of these books is for mechanical drawing, it could be used in all Lao schools that teach the subject. There are other Thai technical and vocational books that can be of important help in training Lao students, and the texts are relatively culture-free.

Books in Teacher Training

Teacher training schools in Laos are more book-oriented than are other types, but the textbook situation even there presents a "mixed bag" picture. The four Ecoles Normales d'Instituteurs (ENI's)--the three and four year teacher training schools outside of Vientiane--have only Lao language sections, and thus suffer from the general dearth of textbooks in that language that prevails everywhere except in the primary school area. At the Ecole Supérieure de Pédagogie (National Education Center--ESP) in the outskirts of Vientiane, the situation is better. The ESP, which educates teachers for the higher grades, has sections in French and English in addition to Lao; and in the Lao section, experimental manuscripts are being prepared.

The ESP Lao manuscripts are not completely new creations; in the main, they are simplified adaptations of French textbooks. Because there is no special curriculum for the Lao section, the standard French secondary curriculum is followed. At the time of our survey, manuscripts for first-year science, mathematics, geography and history had been completed, and the second-year manuscripts were being developed. The manuscripts had not been printed for lack of mimeograph paper, but were being used as optional references for teachers. More qualified writing staff is needed.

The University of Hawaii team is to develop its secondary school and teacher training instructional materials at the ESP. In the interim, before project textbooks are ready, USAID's Instructional Materials Advisor is assisting the ESP effort; from the practical point of view, experience gained in the current ESP writing project will help develop expertise that can be used later in the large-scale University of Hawaii textbook program.

French textbooks are used in the French language section of the ESP, and imported English language textbooks are used in the English section.

The textbook stockroom at the ESP, which can hardly be considered typical since it is doubtless the best stocked collection in the Kingdom, presents the following inventory:

	French	English	Lao-Thai
Science & Math	3,000	921	288
Practical Arts	-	118	538
Literature	5,697	6,097	444
Social Studies	1,600	222	569
	10,297	7,358	1,839

Although no statistics are available, it appears that French textbooks are quite heavily used (both Lao teachers and students prefer books in that language). The Lao books--primary school textbooks and cultural books from the Comité Littéraire--are seldom used. Neither are the English language textbooks read, probably because they are obsolete, inappropriate, or too difficult for the Laotian students. The few Thai books available--pedagogical books on psychology, methods and materials--seem to be well circulated. The ESP claims to be spending about $8,000 per year, primarily for French textbooks, which it lends to the students. English language books are mostly donated--by USAID, the Asia Foundation, etc. The Lao books are supplied by the Ministry of Education.

School Libraries

There are virtually no school libraries in Laos. Efforts to utilize books in the new national thrust for improved education have thus far been concentrated upon the enormous task of getting textbooks into students' hands which never held them before. There has not therefore yet been an opportunity for the Ministry to address itself to the need of developing school libraries. Even the Lycée Pavié which, as one would expect, owns more books than any other secondary school, has abandoned the idea of operating a central library, preferring instead to have a small bookcase for each classroom. For all practical purposes, other schools are also without libraries. Everything remains to be done in this area. In this connection, see our comments in Chapter 3 under "Public Libraries."

The best organized library of any Lao agency is the one at the ESP. Presently containing some 3,600 volumes--950 in French, 2,200 in English, 400 in Thai and 50 in Lao--this library is completely cataloged and arranged on open shelves by Dewey Classification. It occupies pleasant but inadequate quarters, and enjoys between 600 and 700 circulations per month, plus open-shelf, browsing use.

When the ESP's circulation figures for a sample period are analyzed in terms of the number of books available and the number of students registered in the three language sections of instruction, some interesting figures develop:

	Libry. Holdings by Language		Enrollment by Language		Circulation by Language	
	Vol.	Percent	Students	Percent	Vol.	Percent
English	2,200	61.1	186	12.2	310	22.6
French	950	26.4	929	60.9	642	46.7
Lao-Thai	450	12.5	410	26.9	422	30.7
TOTALS	3,600	100.0	1,525	100.0	1,374	100.0

These figures indicate clearly that the library's holdings are disproportionately high in English books and low in Lao-Thai books. Of course, its gross holdings are too low in all languages. These reading, circulation and holdings figures are cited here because they probably typify a general conclusion on holdings distribution by language that could be applied to most libraries in Laos.

BOOKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

While there are no full-scale institutions of higher education in Laos, there are several with incipient higher education activities in Vientiane that provide training programs in the fields of pedagogy, medicine, law and administration, religion and the arts. The ESP was discussed above; we cover the book situation in the other institutions below.

In l'Ecole Royale de Médecine (the Royal School of Medicine), French textbooks are used for the preclinical courses, but students are not expected to, and do not, purchase their own. The new, small library of the school owns a few French textbooks which it makes available to readers for short periods of time, and some professors have professional libraries of their own to which they refer frequently. Basically, however, instruction is not book-oriented.

The library at the Ecole Royale de Médecine has just moved into pleasant, new quarters, and the school is to be congratulated if, as is reported, it now spends fully 10% of its operating budget on the library. Even this, however, will clearly not be enough to solve its problems.

Presently containing only 650 books in French and 100 in English--as well as subscribing to a meager 38 current journals--the collections are woefully inadequate to the school's present instruction need, especially when it is noted that the English volumes can be read only by a few faculty members and it is recalled that the students do not have textbooks. The library has never had a trained librarian. Stacks are closed, and the period of circulation, which currently runs to about 30 books per month, is severely limited. There are author and title catalogs to the books which are shelved by accession number; thus no subject approach to the books is possible.

The library needs rapid expansion of its French holdings as well as those in Lao and Thai, where pertinent materials exist. The latter will be especially true as the school increases its training program for nurses' aides and other technicians who will not likely be as French-fluent as its medical students. Reference sets and scholarly journals are a critical need, and the library requires the guidance of a professionally trained librarian at as early a date as possible.

At l'Institut Royal de Droit et Administration (The Royal Institute of Law and Administration), instruction is in French so that textbooks, when used, are also in French--except for the English language program, which relies heavily upon Longmans and Oxford University Press. French books appear to be adequate to the need in every way, but since the English language courses are directed to adults a situational approach is almost essential, and there is need for a wider range of subject matter texts couched in "ladder" terminology. Again, where textbooks are used at all, they are supplied free to the students.

The library at the Institut occupies a small, pleasant room adjacent to classrooms and offices and presently contains some 1,700 volumes primarily in, although not limited to, the disciplines of economics, law and related subjects. The books are approximately 10% in Lao or Thai, 25% in English and the balance in French. Although the library has not had professional supervision, it has the rudiments of organization, consisting of author and subject card catalogs. The collection appears, however, to be shelved by accession number within broad subject classifications. The books are housed in large, locked shelves, but students have easy access to them and the books are freely circulated for a 15-day period. Statistics show current circulation of about 50 books per month.

There is no library budget, and the collections are totally inadequate for any kind of "problem-solving" teaching method or individual instruction. Reference books and current materials, notably reviews and journals, are especially lacking. Pertinent and well selected books and periodicals are needed first of all in Lao and Thai, then in French, and then in English. Books in English at the present time would be more heavily used if they could be obtained in simplified vocabulary. Improvement in book organization and handling is also needed in the Institut library.

Little is known of the use of books in the important area of higher religious (Buddhist) education. It is reported that there are substantial collections of old and rare Pali and Sanskrit books and manuscripts in the library of the National Museum at Wat Pra Keo and in the other pagodas, yet they appear never to have been cataloged and inventoried. These valuable cultural treasures of the nation are lent from pagoda to pagoda under uncontrolled conditions, and resulting damage and loss are experienced. They are are in obvious and immediate need of professional attention, but their handling can be entrusted only to a librarian with proper linguistic and historical competence.

Textbooks in art are nonexistent in Lao and expensive in any language, so it is not surprising that they are little used in the Ecole des Beaux Arts. There are art books in Thai which would prove useful to these programs and, for that matter, since the text language is of lesser importance in highly illustrated materials, in many other languages as well. Yet again, a tradition of book use is lacking in Laos so that reference to books is virtually nonexistent in the instructional programs.

Despite the lack of book orientation in the Ecole des Beaux Arts, however, it has immediate access to the best general library in Laos. This anomaly came about recently by administrative fiat when the Rockefeller Foundation offered to the nation a nucleus of books around which could be developed a National Library. Space was found in a frame building at the art school, and the collection was placed there where it presently serves as the art school library as well as the National Library. This collection is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

* * * *

A primary conclusion regarding Laotian higher education which must have priority over all others is that top planning should be carried out vigorously and soon at the Ministry level into the nation's higher education needs. The major ingredients of a national university exist in Vientiane. There are already incipient faculties of medicine, law, arts, education and religion, and if it should prove desirable, a faculty of engineering could later be developed out of one of Vientiane's technical school programs. At present, however, these several "faculties" operate autonomously and in isolation from one another. Planning and coordination is needed now to assure that as they grow desirable economies and efficiencies will be made possible through proper administrative direction and the continuing elimination of unnecessary costly duplication in the curriculum staff, plant and management of the institutions.

As part of this total higher education planning structure, there needs to be thought devoted to the development of a total national university library system which would effect and improve modern coordinated library service at all of the aforementioned institutions. Again, greatest efficiency and highest quality service to the entire Vientiane academic community will not be attained if the several institutions are left entirely on their own in the matter of library development. Strong central guidance will be needed.

The schools of higher education may fully expect that they will be increasingly pressed to engage in the book-oriented teaching method. This pressure will come from at least three sources. The first is the state of world social and technical development which is changing at such a rapid rate that a graduate of a school of higher education who has learned only by rote memorization will often find his learning obsolete within five years of his graduation. A truly educated man will be the one who knows how to keep his learning continually updated, and only people who have learned to use books extensively will find it possible to do this. The second source of pressure will be Lao teachers and professional people who return from training abroad where they have come to understand the great importance of book use and to expect that books will be available for their utilization both in classrooms and in libraries. The third source of pressure will be students themselves. The 1962 Educational Reform Law favors the introduction and encouragement of book use in the school system, and the students now receiving their education in this new tradition will also expect to have books available in higher education. Hopefully, this day is not far distant.

Library and other book utilization is not now possible in Laos even to meet its present limited higher education responsibilities, to say nothing of its inadequacy in the face of pressures which are already arising from these and other sources. Attention at all levels should be directed now to the improvement of the nation's book and library resources for higher educational purposes. The need is for planning, collection development, plant improvement, staff training and administrative organization.

In this regard, we have four major team recommendations:

> (1) A total national plan should be designed for Laotian higher education. Presumably this entire plan could consist of a blueprint for the organization into a single "Université Royale de Laos" of the presently autonomous professional schools of medicine, law, arts, education (the ESP), and religion. Barring compelling reasons thereafter to depart from it, all future developments in higher education should be consistent with this total plan.

(2) It should be recognized at this time that the small libraries now in the several professional schools in Vientiane constitute divisions of an incipient university library system. The total university plan recommended above should recognize the need for developing and coordinating these libraries under a single administrative direction; when a post of director of university libraries is ultimately established it should not be considered a sinecure for a faculty member but should go to an aggressive, knowledgeable, professional librarian who is able to assure sound library development by bringing to it a thorough understanding of the role of books and libraries in the worldwide thrust for growth in scholarship.

(3) All potential sources of scholarly books should be tapped for materials to enhance and develop the libraries that will later constitute divisions of the royal Lao university library system. Care should be taken, however, to ensure that books are not simply added to the collections for the sake of increasing statistics on holdings. Each book accessioned should be able to prove its potential value to the ultimate need of the university and should be located consistent with the national plan for higher education.

(4) In cataloging and processing books for the libraries of the several professional schools, it should be borne in mind that they will ultimately constitute units of a single university library system. They should therefore be handled now as uniformly as possible so as to facilitate their subsequent articulation at minimum cost.

A FOOTNOTE ON LANGUAGES OF INSTRUCTION AND LEARNING

We have noted in this chapter that during the past two decades Lao has replaced French as the language of instruction in primary school, and that the initial steps are now being taken to replace French with Lao in the secondary and teacher training schools. Because of the overwhelming dependence of the secondary and higher education components of the formal school system on French language instruction, instructors, and instructional materials, and because those who go on to the universities generally do so in France--French will continue to be predominant at the secondary and higher levels of Lao education for many years to come.

From the communication and from the educational points of view, French becomes important for those who go beyond third grade. For those beyond sixth grade, French can indeed become the open window to the world of learning and knowledge. However, relatively few Laotians can make use of this access to the world, nor will many be able to do so for a long time to come. In point of fact, Thai--not French--is the second language of Laos. More Laotians can understand it than French, and students in the upper cycle of primary school can read Thai without great difficulty, for Thai is closely related to Lao.

For the overwhelming majority of Laotians who have attended at least three years of school, Thai may well be the most practical means of learning through the printed word. Certainly the recent upsurge of book publishing (including much in the developmental book classification) in Thailand points to the presence nearby of an easily assimilable and adaptable body of knowledge in a Lao-related language.* Thai radio and periodicals are popular among Laotians at the present time; in the absence of Laotian reading materials, ESP students are avid readers of Thai newspapers and periodicals. Thai books (see Chapter 4) are also well received by Lao readers.

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*New curriculum developments and textbook writing experiments in Thailand also can be of great benefit to Laos' educators, who face many of the same problems as Thailand's educators, but on a more basic level.

More and more Lao study teams go to Thailand, and Lao ministries have become increasingly aware of the possibilities offered by Thai educational and instructional materials. However, political problems and questions of cultural purity and prestige hamper widespread acceptance of Thai materials in many areas. It is our opinion that the advantages of using Thai materials clearly outweigh their disadvantages. In reality, Laos may not have a choice: with the extant lack of Lao reading materials, of a viable Lao book industry, and a trained human resource on one hand, and a de-emphasis on French on the other, Thai language developmental materials may be the short-term as well as the medium-term solution to the Kingdom's acute shortage.

In addition, with English the important second language in Thailand, Laos has, through Thai, potential access to an alternate route to world knowledge and learning.

CHAPTER 3

READING MATERIALS OUTSIDE THE SCHOOLS

MATERIALS AND LIBRARIES FOR THE VILLAGERS

Printed Materials

There is no active adult literacy program in Laos; there is, however, an energetic but still small effort on the part of the Royal Lao Government and foreign agencies to produce instructional and other reading materials for the village neoliterates--those who have attended several years of primary school, and who will forget how to read unless easy-to-read material is made available to them.

UNESCO has maintained a fundamental education project to develop village-based "fundamental educators" whose mission is to teach villagers, to help maintain literacy among the poorly educated, and to produce simple materials for them. The program has been fairly quiescent during recent years. The development of printed materials has come instead from a loosely (but effectively) coordinated group of indigenous and foreign organizations active in the fields of community development, rural development and agricultural development. This activity has taken various forms--most of which are tied into the "Village Cluster" program--a multi-organization attempt to improve Lao village life in the Mekong River flood plain. Village clusters are defined as a group of villages related by proximity, and usually comprising a muong, or district.

Among the organizations and specialists active in the creation, production, distribution and use of training, instructional, and reading materials for the village clusters have been USAID rural development advisors, public health advisors, agricultural extension advisors, and education advisors, USAID's communications media staff, members of the International Voluntary Services (IVS) USAID-contract group, the United States Information Service Mission, the Asia Foundation, and the Rural Affairs specialists of the Royal Lao Government. USAID rural development advisors live and work in the clusters as counterparts to the Lao Rural Affairs specialists; IVS personnel are also assigned to some clusters.

The Lao ministries provide some training and instructional materials for their own agents working in the villages; however, they seldom have provided such materials for villagers themselves. USAID rural development advisors and the IVS have stepped into the breach to develop simple pamphlets on subjects such as "Village Sanitation", "Water Seal Toilets", "How to Make School Furniture", and "Dug Wells"--usually in content fields that do not duplicate the activities of the Lao Rural Affairs specialists; the Rural Affairs specialist is usually consulted in the development of the material. The pamphlets are printed by USAID's Communications Media unit. Sometimes material is first developed in one cluster, reproduced on mimeograph, then is picked up elsewhere and finally printed.

More elaborate 12-16 page agriculture and health-oriented pamphlets, worked out by Lao and U.S. government personnel, also are developed and printed through USAID and through USIS. These have attractive 4-color covers and are printed on wood free paper; the text is reproduced from handwritten script. Typical pamphlet subjects have been nutrition, farming, the 4-H Club, insects, and farm crops (corn, beans, pineapples, cucumbers, oranges). Groups of individual pamphlets have been bound together to form books.

In addition, leaflets and brochures are created jointly by USIS and by USAID's public health personnel on a periodic basis, as well as to counter emergency health problems; these are prepared for villagers as well as public health trainees. To assist in the training of public health personnel (medical aides and practical nurses), pertinent primary school textbooks developed through the Educational Materials Development Project are employed. In addition, a small book on maternal and child care--written by an American registered nurse, translated by Lao nurses, and printed at the USIA Regional Services Center at Manila--is used for training.

Other printed materials available in the villages include the Lao version of the lavishly 4-color illustrated USIA "Current World" magazine (printed in Manila), which is filled with practical articles for villagers, and a simple 4-page bi-monthly newssheet "Village Progress," printed by USAID Communications Media, which reports village developments, and contains household hints, sewing tips, and the like. Also, with the help of Rural Development Advisors and IVS personnel, some clusters have developed mimeographed newspapers that contain stories and articles of personal and civic interest; and USAID personnel working with Lao agricultural extension service workers have developed leaflets (e.g. "Improve Your Rice Cultivation") for distribution to farmers--although, because few of the older farmers can read, radio is often favored by that audience.

Cluster Libraries

Outside of the 5,000-volume collection at Wat That in Luang Prabang, which circulates about 100 books monthly, there are no formal public libraries in Laos, although several other libraries do render service to the public. This is not surprising, for there are practically no books in Laos (see Chapter 4) to put in the libraries.

A major problem arising from the absence of books and of public library service in Laos was well defined in the following comment on the library situation in developing countries by Lester Asheim, Director of the Office for Library Education of the American Library Association:

> "Obviously there can be no readers if the ability to read is lacking, but it is odd that it was not equally obvious that there can be no readers, even where the ability exists, if there is nothing to read. One of the great failures in the war against illiteracy is the fact that the battle has been so frequently abandoned at precisely the point when the skill has been developed, leaving the new literate no opportunity to exercise and to perfect his newly acquired talent. It seems incredible that well-intentioned teachers and educators would deliberately whet an appetite they had no intention of satisfying, but that is what has happened in literacy programs around the world."*

In addition to the necessity for books for the continuing struggle for literacy, of course, a second and equally strong reason for the establishment of a rudimentary public library service in Laos is its importance to any program of technical, agricultural, and community development. Anecdotes can be cited _ad infinitum_ of how a farmer in Taiwan increased his rice production 50% after reading a pamphlet from the library, or how a fisherman in the Philippines improved his catch, or a villager in Pakistan established a thriving furniture factory in his home. It is not necessary to repeat them here to make the point clear.

Despite the obvious need for reading matter however, there is at present no formalized public library service in Laos. In many parts of the nation a person who wanted to read would have to travel fifty miles or more even for a newspaper. It is hardly to be wondered at that illiteracy and underdevelopment persist under such circumstances.

During the past several years, however, there have been a handful of informal pilot efforts to furnish low-key library service at the village cluster level, and they have been very successful. These reading centers or "cluster libraries" are being emphasized by Lao and foreign agencies both because of their neoliteracy aspects and because of the hope that they eventually can be integrated into the nucleus of a national system of public libraries. Cluster libraries have developed rapidly through the efforts of IVS Volunteers and USAID community development advisors. In October 1966, there were six cluster libraries; by the time of our visit to Laos four months later, five additional cluster libraries had been opened--making a total of 11 in the 13 village cluster programs that had been started.

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*_Librarianship in the Developing Countries_, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966, pp. 49-50.

The cluster libraries have been assisted on an informal, *ad hoc* basis by the organizations noted above, which are active in the development and distribution of neoliterate and farmer-oriented reading materials. In addition to leaflets, brochures and pamphlets of the types described previously, the cluster libraries generally have been provided (through USAID assistance) with copies of the relatively few Lao books in print, and with multiple copies of two to three dozen primary school project textbooks (for self-study use by adults). In addition, the libraries receive copies of easy-to-read Vientiane newspapers, which can be read by those with two-three years of schooling.

Within two months of its opening at the end of 1966, the cluster library at Vang Vieng was servicing 20 to 30 visitors daily and was circulating 15 books per day. The library is an indirect result of the purchase by the director of the Vang Vieng *Groupe Scolaire* (six-year primary school) of 100 Thai books for his teachers. The teachers' lack of interest inspired IVS Volunteers Tom and Annie Russell to use the books as the nucleus of the cluster library. Since that time USIS has donated 250 "practical" books (including 150 technical and vocational books in Thai, 35-40 in French, and 25 in English); and USAID has donated cultural books published by the Comité Littéraire, primary school textbooks, and the low-level Lao newspapers, plus the Lao military and police periodicals. Users of the library have included businessmen, military personnel, teachers, and--as one would expect--large numbers of school children starved for nourishment for their new-found ability to learn from a printed text. The cluster libraries being developed in the other clusters have proved equally popular.

It is apparent that small public libraries should be established in every population center. These libraries need not--indeed they _should_ not--be elaborate, but should rather be simply appointed, modest accommodations, with a few open shelves and benches. Simple reading texts, many of which should be addressed to an adult interest level, should be sought in Lao and Thai; posters and illustrated magazines should be stocked as available; and a newspaper or two should be furnished. An absolute minimum of accountability should be required; every effort should be made to make prospective learners feel that these materials are stocked for their use and not just for "show."

It is not easy to propose just where in the villages the reading centers should most appropriately be physically located. There is some reason to feel that consistency of location from village to village would be beneficial, as it would probably make them easier to establish by reducing the need for so much creative initiative and competition for them on a local level. On the other hand, although it might allow libraries to become political issues on occasion, the argument has some merit that _not_ limiting the village reading centers to specific locations permits them freedom to be developed wherever within each community there is greatest individual support and interest for them.

There appear to be at least four possible locations for community libraries, each with its own congeries of advantages and disadvantages. They are:

(1) In the _groupes scolaires_, the two big advantages here are first that the schools will long be major generators of user traffic, and second that such a location ties libraries into a desirable national administrative structure--the Ministry of National Education--about which more will be said later;

a primary disadvantage, however, is that some potential adult users would probably be reluctant to go to a school to read.

(2) In the wats (pagodas); the two major advantages here are first that pagodas exist in all communities, and second that they have long been looked upon as custodians of educational effort; a large disadvantage is that many who are less motivated in a religious sense would be hesitant to go to the pagodas just for their reading material.

(3) Adjacent to the village headman's office; a library there would benefit from their great community value being demonstrated daily to muong officials by the use that is being made of it; local government, on the other hand, is seldom an important generator of library use, so if it were located there almost all users would have to leave where they are and come to it.

(4) In a separate building; this has the advantage of being politically, religiously, and educationally neutral, but a separate building presents large problems of special construction, maintenance and staffing.

Recognizing these and other lesser considerations, the team has concluded that the groupes scolaires would probably serve best as the locus for community reading rooms. Its reasons for this conclusion are as follows:

(1) The schools, as observed above, are major generators of library traffic.

(2) Libraries are, after all, an educational activity.

(3) Space and sympathetic supervision are more likely to be available in the schools than elsewhere.

(4) There already exists in the national educational structure a book distribution mechanism which could, with minimal adaptation, be made to serve the library need.

(5) The libraries, if in the groupes scolaires, would fall naturally under the general supervision of the Ministry of National Education, which is quite appropriate.

(6) Development of libraries in the groupes scolaires would contribute to the solution of the aforementioned problem that there are at present virtually no school libraries.

For these reasons the team recommends that community reading rooms be developed in the groupes scolaires, but it also urges that these libraries make every effort to manifest in their collections and services that they recognize their responsibility in the areas of continuing and adult education as well as to the schools. (The Asia Foundation recently reached an agreement with the Ministry of Education for the installation of 38 "little libraries" in as many groupes scolaires.)

There are several possible ways of developing financial support for community reading rooms. These include the obvious ones of taxing, of funding through the boun (a money-raising feast), of soliciting gifts, of charging for use or renting books, etc. It may be that all of these devices will have to serve in greater or lesser degrees, and it of course may also be that new and different sources of funds can be identified. An ingenious innovation of this kind has recently been made in Korea, for example, where a non-profit agency solicits modest sums from successful civil servants and businessmen with village background to place small reading centers in their home villages as identified gifts specifically from them. These reading centers cost an equivalent of $14.00 U.S. apiece and contain at their opening a bookcase and thirty books. Well over 5,000 Korean villages have now been stocked with such "micro-libraries," as they are somewhat inappropriately named, and an otherwise unmet reading need is now being served.* Perhaps such a device could be usefully developed in Laos.

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*For further information, see "Korean Micro-Libraries and Private Reading Rooms" by David Kaser, Library Journal XCI, 6035-38, December 15, 1966.

Needs and Suggestions

Among the reading materials needs conveyed continuously by knowledgeable individuals in Laos were:

- Books and pamphlets for children who leave school at grade three.
- Easy-to-read books at a mature interest level for new readers.
- Classroom sets of supplementary readers for children, particularly in the fields of science, health, fiction and biography.
- Training manuals for home economics agents who train leaders at the village level.
- Easy-to-read pamphlets on food and nutrition, sewing and garment construction, personal and environmental sanitation.
- Easy-to-read fiction and stories of achievement and sacrifice based on actual experience.
- How-to-do-it books written at about a third grade level.

Excellent materials of this type are already being prepared by foreign donor agencies and are being distributed through cluster libraries and other channels, but the need goes far beyond the present capability to meet it. For these programs there is need for writers' workshops and for bibliographies of materials in Thai that could be distributed and read in Laos.*

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*Among appropriate Thai materials that can be imported and widely distributed are the practical and plentiful output of the rice, agriculture, animal husbandry and other departments of the Thai Ministry of Agriculture--pamphlets, leaflets and periodicals for extension workers and farmers; similar material issued by the Thai Ministry of the Interior (on community development); and Thai light novels and weekly periodicals and journals.

As a way to coordinate efforts and to increase the development of materials for new readers at all levels, we suggest the establishment of a center under the direction of a foreign writing or editorial specialist. This center would bear the same relationship to USAID, USIS, The Asia Foundation and other agencies as a service division does to the operating divisions of a publishing firm. It would be a service center for the preparation of reading materials for the operating division (the agencies) to distribute and would be financed much as a service center in a publishing company is--the operating agencies would pay the service center for services received.

As for the book needs listed above, they are urgent, and we recommend that the sponsoring organizations consider taking the financial and technical assistance steps needed to meet them.

One of the greatest needs in Laos is source material for authors of children's books, of basic readers and supplementary readers, and of books of fiction for adults. Although Laos does not have a written tradition, it does have a rich oral tradition--a tradition which can easily be tapped as a source for many types of literature. By using a tape recorder, an anthropologist could collect the stories as told by mothers, old men and monks. These tapes could and should be used by authors as sources for children's books and for magazine articles. The stories would reflect Laotian cultural and moral values and patterns.

No effort should be spared to enlarge the range of reading materials now available to school age children through making some kind of library service available to them, so that literacy once attained can be maintained. As part of this effort, the mobile library concept might be developed, to bring reading materials to the smaller villages around the cluster village.

LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

Special Libraries

Laos has as yet had little opportunity for the development of special libraries and documentation centers. There are, however, two or three activities in the former area which deserve being reported here.

Table 2 on the following page shows that the largest special library in the nation is at the Materials Production Center (Bureau des Manuels Scolaires) which we discussed briefly in Chapter 2. This library contains some 5,000 volumes, mostly out-of-date textbooks, which are primarily for reference and resource use by the staff of the MPC; it is, however, open to the public and currently records some 300 circulations monthly. It is simply arranged by the Dewey Classification Scheme and is rather well housed. Its book collections--1,100 in French, 1,200 in English, 2,900 in Thai, and 500 in Lao--have all been donated; it has no operating budget.

The Direction de l'Agriculture also has a special library of French and English books numbering some 1,400. It has not yet been fully organized, and it sees limited use, but it is perhaps the best library on a single subject in the country.*

The Archives Nationales contains 2,500 volumes, primarily in law, social sciences and history, and it holds as well certain official records of the Royal Lao Government. It is loosely organized by its own classification scheme into eleven broad subject categories and has a mimeographed,

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*Other donor agencies should supplement, as far as possible, an Asia Foundation plan to help develop ministerial libraries. Besides English language books, the Foundation plans to donate pertinent Thai books. In addition to the support of U.S. agencies, it is to be hoped that the French (and possibly the Canadians) can assist through the donation of French language books.

Table 2. HOLDINGS AND CIRCULATION OF LIBRARIES IN LAOS

LAO LIBRARIES	Held Volumes	Books in French	Books in English	Books in Thai	Books in Lao	Volumes in other languages	Monthly Circulation
Archives Nationales	2,484	2,484	-	-	-	-	5
National Library	8,957	8,857	-	100	-	-	72
National Museum	2,805	98	-	194	698	1,815	-
Ecole de Médecine	762	662	100	-	-	-	30
Ecole Supérieure de Pédagogie (ESP)	7,927	1,769	4,914	1,101	116	27	660
Institut de Droit	1,710	1,121	443	16	130	-	50
Direction de l'Agriculture	1,320	860	460	-	-	-	5
Bureau des Manuels Scolaires (MPC)	5,250	1,100	1,200	2,900	50	-	300
Vang Vieng Public Library	251	65	43	40	91	12	162
Luang-Prabang Public Library	5,048	-	385	4,603	60	-	100
Lao Library Subtotals	36,514	17,016	7,545	8,954	1,145	1,854	1,384
FOREIGN LIBRARIES							
USIS Library, Vientiane	4,297	1,081	2,785	145	16	270	610
USIS Library, Luang-Prabang	2,748	1,191	1,174	163	26	194	105
USIS Library, Savannakhet	2,528	737	1,182	164	33	412	179
USIS Library, Pakse	2,686	991	1,225	188	56	226	133
American School Library	3,100	-	3,100	-	-	-	2,250
British Information Service	2,687	-	2,687	-	-	-	168
Centre Culturel Français	4,076	4,076	-	-	-	-	512
United Nations Staff Library	1,507	1,000	507	-	-	-	5
USAID Technical Library	3,275	-	3,210	11	54	-	189
Foreign Library Subtotals	26,904	9,076	15,870	671	185	1,102	4,151
TOTALS	63,418	26,092	23,415	9,625	1,330	2,956	5,535

Source: Russell Marcus, IVS, 1967.

book-form catalog. Although its main purpose is to serve members of the National Assembly and civil servants, the Archives Nationales is open to the public and will circulate its books to outside users upon their proper identification. Such circulation, however, is limited.

There have as yet been no viable documentation activities in Laos, although the UNESCO Educational Advisor contemplates encouraging such activity in the future.

National Library

This library is sometimes referred to as the Rockefeller Library, because most of its books were donated by the Rockefeller Foundation, and sometimes as the library of the Ecole des Beaux Arts because it is housed on that campus. It is probably the best general library in Laos, containing some 9,000 well-selected, modern volumes in French on a wide range of subject matter.

The National Library is quite well classified by the Dewey Scheme, has an author-title catalog and a shelf-list, and circulates books to the public. It currently has some 850 registered borrowers and circulates for a two-week loan period almost 100 books per month. It is in need of better quarters than are presently available to it. It operates under the purview of, but without subsidy from, the Ministry of National Education.

Pertinent Foreign Libraries

There are four foreign libraries in Vientiane which render important service to the public. The library of the Centre Culturel Français, with its 5,000 French books, serves as a public library for Vientiane. Likewise the USIS library--approximately the same size but with books in Thai, French and Lao, as well as in English--serves as a public library, recording well over 600 circulations per month.* The British Information Service Library owns 2,700 books, circulating 170 monthly.

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*There are also USIS libraries at Luang-Prabang, Savannakhet, and Pakse.

The best foreign library of books of potential use in technical and community development is the USAID Library. A well-managed collection of 3,300 volumes, primarily in English, this library contains important works in economic development, applied sciences, technology, husbandry, agriculture, etc. Its circulation approaches 200 books per month, some of which is to the public at large.

One important value to Laos of these four well-administered foreign libraries is that they serve as examples to the nation of how libraries can be used and what they can mean to their publics. Another value is that their staffs can be expected to furnish out of their experience a sizable segment of the professional leadership which Laos will be requiring in the years to come. In addition, however, it must be recognized that their aggregate collections of 27,000 books comprise more than one-third of the total library book stocks now in Laos; thus the portion of the national information need actually being met currently by these few foreign libraries may be seen as being substantial.

Bibliographic and Professional Activities

It is still too early in the period of book and library development in Laos for there to have been established any reportable bibliographic or professional activity. There is as yet no national bibliography, no national union catalog, no national periodical index, nor is there a professional library association or program for library education. Some of these efforts are not yet necessary. It is not too early, however, to begin laying out a firm comprehensive national plan for library and bibliographic development, and the team recommends that such planning be done at the earliest possible time.

Library Recommendations

(1) A division for Lao libraries should be established under the Ministry of National Education. All library matters in the nation--except for those concerned with foreign or private interest libraries--should be coordinated through the division. It should be headed by a librarian.

(2) A national plan for library development and service should be prepared under the supervision of this division. The plan should comprehend all libraries which are in any way responsible to the Government, including school libraries, public libraries, government agency special libraries, the libraries of higher education, and the National Library.

(3) This division should be prepared to furnish leadership in all matters of library concern to the nation, including the encouragement of appropriate library legislation, the establishment of a professional library association, the development of a program of library training consistent with the nation's needs, participation in international library affairs, advising local libraries in matters of proper techniques of cataloging and processing, compilation of statistics, working to preserve and make known book holdings which constitute national cultural treasures, etc.

(4) Laos' responsibility for developing and maintaining a true National Library should be recognized. The Rockefeller Library and the books in the Archives Nationales should be combined under the supervision of a librarian, given adequate funding, and placed in better quarters so that a true National Library can grow. In long-range planning for the National Library the possible desirability of locating it on or near to the ultimate campus of the royal Lao university should not be overlooked; indeed, given proper financial support, it might be possible for a single research collection to serve as both the National Library and the university general library.

(5) The National Library should be separated administratively from the National Museum at as early a date as possible. These two functions require totally different kinds of staffing, collecting, facilities and servicing; wherever they are attempted under a single supervision both activities suffer.

(6) Planning should begin soon toward the accomplishment of a national bibliography and a national union catalog.

(7) Advice and support in matters of library development should be sought from any foreign governments, multilateral agencies, foundations, etc. that can and will furnish it, but the Royal Lao Government should remain strongly aware of the fact that the continuing education of its citizens through libraries as well through schools is a national responsibility.

(8) Effort should be made to develop among all persons charged with the handling of books in Lao libraries a better understanding of the problems and principles of book preservation in tropical climatic conditions. Without such understanding Laos' meager library stocks will disintegrate even faster than is necessary. There is not now a Lao bookbindery; the early development of one would seem to be essential.

CHAPTER 4

THE LAO BOOK INDUSTRY

As might be expected in a country of 2,500,000 with over 80% illiteracy and an oral rather than a written tradition, Laos neither imports nor produces great amounts of books and reading materials, and its book industry is embryonic.

BOOK IMPORTS

According to Lao import statistics, imports of books and pamphlets in 1965 totaled 12,707,831 kip ($25,400).* Of these, 53% originated in Thailand, 28% in the United States, and 14% in Hong Kong. Only 207,000 kip ($414) worth came from France. Most of the imports from the United States represent reading material for the American colony in the Kingdom. The MOE/USAID primary school textbook project volumes printed in Manila do not appear on the import statistics; neither apparently do the French textbooks used in the secondary schools and in some primary schools. Laos has no tariff on imports of books and printed matter.

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*We were unable to find any authoritative definition of the term "book" among Lao printers, publishers and booksellers. According to most of those we interviewed, any bound work that is eight or more pages in length is considered a book. The internationally accepted UNESCO book definition applies to works that are over 48 pages; thus, many Lao "books" are actually pamphlets.

Table 3.

BOOKS PRODUCED IN LAOS, 1964
(Number of First Edition Titles and Volumes
by new UNESCO classification)

Books	Titles	No. of Copies
Religion	1	3,000
Education	1	4,000
Ethnography, Folklore	2	1,000
Mathematics	6	128,000
Natural Sciences	6	139,000
Agriculture, Forestry	4	128,000
Domestic Science	2	96,000
Literature	6	120,000
Literary History & Criticism	14	15,000
Literary Texts	4	6,000
Geography, Travel	4	139,000
Total Books	50	779,000
Pamphlets		
Visual and Audio Arts	2	1,000
TOTAL BOOKS & PAMPHLETS	52	780,000

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1965

LOCAL PRODUCTION

Table 3 indicates that a total of 50 books and 2 pamphlets was produced in Laos during 1964 (the last year for which these statistics are available). 779,000 copies of the 50 book titles were printed. According to UNESCO, 28 of the book titles were textbooks, and they accounted for 750,000, or 96%, of the volumes produced that year. The textbook totals include public and private sector publishing. Presumably the 22 non-textbook titles (which account for 29,000 copies) are in the following categories: religion; education; ethnography and folklore; and literary history, criticism and texts.

The dearth of Lao language books is dramatized by the results of a USAID search for books in print made in February 1967. (The Mission was then seeking titles to stock cluster libraries.) Magazines, dictionaries, "small booklets" and textbooks were not included in the list. Only 35 titles could be located; by classification they comprised mostly belles lettres and religious-philosophical works of little use (in the developmental sense) to the vast majority of Laotians:

Literary & Cultural	10	Law	2
Religion & Philosophy	5	Social	2
History & Civics	5	Mathematics	1
Poetry & Songs	3	Health	2
Linguistics	2	Others	3

An analysis of points at which the books were sold reveals that very few are destined for the commercial trade; almost all are published for agencies of the Royal Lao Government. Twenty-one titles were on sale at the Comité Littéraire (the Ministry of Education's cultural book publishing unit), four titles were on sale at the Ministry of Education, three titles at the Young Buddhist Monks' Association, three at USIS, one each at the Ministries of Public Health and Information, and four at the Nai Chai Book Store.*

Laos adheres to the Universal Copyright Convention.

Publishing, Printing and Bookselling

The two largest book publishers in Laos are the Materials Production Center/USAID combination which has published (mostly abroad) the more than 2,000,000 primary school textbooks, and the Comité Littéraire; both the MPC and the Comité of course belong to the Ministry of Education.

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*Points of sale total more than 35 because several titles were on sale at two locations.

In Laos, as in many other countries with newly created book industries, the same organization often operates in two of the three sectors of the industry: publishing, printing and bookselling. Laos has some bookseller-publishers and some printer-publishers--but few who produce more than several books a year. The largest by far in the latter category, and the only potentially large-scale book producer in the Kingdom, is the Lao Photo Presse-Service Géographique National group, directed by Chansamone Voravong. The Service Géographique has a modern (by Lao standards) printing plant; it is part of the Ministry of Public Works. The Lao Photo Presse, provisionally under the Service Géographique during our survey, has a smaller plant at another location. Both are to be merged and operated as a State Enterprise in a new plant that is under construction.

Lao Photo Presse has been subsidized to the extent of about $500,000 in U.S. aid. It does Government printing of various sorts, and also job printing. It is the most complete press in operation in the country; it has three one-half sheet offset presses and two one-quarter sheet presses. Expected during spring 1967 was a secondhand 29" x 47" Harris four-color offset press (with two short-term technicians to place it into operation). USAID was to pay the transportation cost for this manufacturer-donated press. Lao Photo Presse has received assistance from other sources as well. The Asia Foundation is providing it with a Japanese hand type caster, and was reported to be considering the donation of a four-station self collator, trimmer and stitcher for staple-bound books.

Theoretically, Lao Photo Presse, with its new equipment, might produce many of the future textbooks of the Kingdom. During our visit it was operating only on one shift from lack of work. As a sort of Lao Government Printing Office, however, it is called upon--often in haste--to produce a multitude of unrelated materials, and care must be taken to "leave it open" for sudden printing emergencies. The Service Géographique printed the Educational Materials Development Project Geography P4 textbook.

The Lao private publishing-printing sector almost completely lacks organization, professionalism and capacity.

The editorial concept is completely foreign to its members. Much of the printing it contracts to do is let out on contract to Thai or Hong Kong firms. A brief resume of the size and nature of the "three largest private printer-publishers in Laos" testifies to their limited potential as important book producers:

> Phone Presse (Vientiane Phanith) was under contract--see Chapter 2--to print the primary school textbook project History P1 and Teachers' Manual P1 at the time of our survey. Among the four textbooks it reportedly has published during recent years are a 40 kip pratom 1 primer (64 pages of simple black and white letterpress on newsprint) that has been used in Laos for several decades; and a somewhat more elaborate 268-page Classe 6B French language reader, "Choix des Lectures Pour les Ecoles du Laos" (black and white letterpress on wood free paper) which is priced at 360 kip (72¢) Cost of the first printing of the 6B reader was funded by the French Cultural Mission; since then Phone Presse has printed, on its own, a second 10,000-copy edition, which is sold at the Casa Lao bookstore. The plant of Phone Presse was old, dark, crowded and dirty.
>
> Vieng Krung, the oldest private printing plant in Laos (began in 1957), prints some Government reports in addition to a daily newspaper. Its past book experience apparently is confined to a 60-page work printed for the Ministry of Cults, containing religious precepts for its employees. The plant has severely limited letterpress capacity.
>
> Lao Houng Press has three museum-vintage, flatbed, letterpress machines (one inoperative during our visit), and prints daily and monthly newspapers. The few books it prints are mainly religious works--biographies or prayers--produced as gifts in commemoration of the deaths of important people.

The non-Government publishing in Laos is generally "vanity" publishing in which the author prepares the manuscript and does his own editing, design and distribution--buying the printing from local printers. Thus, there is no Laotian publishing in the true sense of the word.

Type for newspapers and books is not manufactured in Laos; it is imported from Thailand, and is sometimes more Thai in character than Lao. There are no line-casting machines in Laos for mechanical composition work.* The Lao printing "industry" is plagued by many problems, among which are frequent breakdowns of the electricity that powers the presses, lack of capital to purchase paper in quantity (printers usually are limited to bids on reams of paper brought in from Thailand), and an acute shortage of qualified printing and production personnel, including artists and layout people. Some MPC production personnel have received training in Bangkok, via USAID participant training grants; three cameramen and pressmen from Service Géographique were scheduled to go there under the same auspices.

Laos produces no paper--all must be shipped into the Kingdom. According to Lao customs figures, 16,400,000 kip of newsprint was imported into the country in 1965 --virtually all from Thailand (which produces none herself). Of almost 43,000,000 kip worth of printing and writing paper, 50% came from Taiwan, 40% from Thailand, and most of the rest was imported from France and Japan. There is a 10% ad valorem duty on printing and writing paper.

Printing inks are also imported, primarily from Great Britain and Taiwan, and are also subject to a 10% duty.

Vientiane has three bookstores: Nai Chai, the most active of the lot, which sells Thai books (it has hundreds of titles on its shelves); Casa Lao, which sells French language books; and Kaye Ando, which sells English language books.

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*However, as noted above, Lao Photo Presse is receiving a hand type caster from The Asia Foundation.

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Because of the conspicuous superiority of the book producing capability of the Lao Photo Presse-Service Géographique--and the obvious inadequacy of other printers--we recommend that it be selected to print the secondary (and the as-yet unprinted primary) school textbooks to be produced in Laos. (The new Harris offset press and Asia Foundation-donated equipment will strengthen the Lao Photo Presse even further.) Lao private printers are unfortunately unable to do the job; nor will they be in the near future. We suggest that Lao Photo Presse be provided the additional technical and commodity assistance it will need to carry out a textbook producing activity.

At the same time, we strongly urge that it avoid complicated, multicolored books--especially during the first years of textbook production. In view of Laos' current human resource and financial inadequacies, the need in locally produced books is for simple, inexpensive, easy-to-print works; greater subtlety and beauty can come later.

Realistically, Lao Photo Presse will be unable to produce more than a fraction of Laos' textbook needs (including primary school textbook reprints) for some years to come. Until that time, USAID would be wise to continue partial reliance on the USIA Manila Service Center.

The human resource problem is more difficult for Lao Photo Presse to solve than is the possible lack of plant capacity. Participant training in East Asia for needed graphic artists, layout specialists and other production technicians should continue to be supported by USAID.

CHAPTER 5

ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN AGENCIES

Non-Lao donor and technical assistance organizations have significantly furthered the educational and developmental book-related efforts of the Royal Lao Government. Many of these activities have been noted previously in the report.

UNESCO and the Colombo Plan countries have contributed technical personnel, including teachers, and UNESCO supports the current activities of two specialists who have had deep impact on textbook creation and "fundamental education" programs--respectively, the Materials Production Center specialist who writes and edits primary school textbooks, and the Adult Literacy specialist who has developed the "10 Centers of Interest" concept.

French aid pays the salaries of many of the French teachers who staff the secondary and vocational schools. The French also provide textbooks and other supplies and sponsor and finance the Lycée Pavié in Vientiane. In addition, most of the scholarships for higher education in foreign countries come from the French aid mission.

Pertinent bilateral assistance has been provided by other countries as well. Canada has donated 20 tons of good quality offset paper for Ministry of Education books, and the Canadian External Aid Office is funding the printing in Canada of French language versions of the primary school Géographie P4, P5 and P6 textbooks (10,000 copies each). Both Japan and Australia have donated radios and school supplies for schoolrooms.

The various foreign donor agencies in Laos have formed an international educational exchange committee which might become the nucleus for a concerted international effort. Originally founded to coordinate out-of-country training scholarships offered by its various members, the committee has broadened its scope of interest to include local training and manpower planning assistance. Political factors have thus far prevented a still further broadening of the committee's efforts to encompass the coordination of all forms of international aid to Lao education. Countries represented on the committee include Australia, Canada, France, India, Thailand, the United States and the Republic of Vietnam.

The remainder of this chapter briefly covers some of the book-related activities of U.S. entities--USAID and its contract groups; USIA/USIS; and The Asia Foundation.

USAID/Laos

USAID has been engaged in large-scale program assistance aimed at improving the Lao educational system. The program has emphasized three major activities: (a) training of a corps of local teachers sufficient to meet immediate needs; (b) providing under the community education program the necessary physical plant, school supplies and educational materials for the primary school system, and educational materials for the secondary schools; and (c) furnishing technical and commodity assistance for school materials production.

In order to meet immediate needs for teachers, the first program is designed to provide or upgrade teacher training facilities. Much of the USAID effort since 1955 has been concentrated on the National Education Center (ESP)--first with a Michigan State University contract group, and then with IVS. Participant training in the U.S. and third countries is being provided for the attainment of proficiency in selected subjects and in teaching.

The community education activity is designed to overcome shortages in physical facilities, school supplies and educational materials. In a recent development, various divisions of USAID working in combination with USIS, The Asia Foundation, and the IVS contract personnel have established "cluster libraries " to bring reading materials to villagers.

Through the Educational Materials Development Project, over 2,000,000 primary school textbooks have been produced and distributed to children in pratoms 1-6; and the facilities of the Materials Production Center have been improved and its personnel provided some training in school materials production. During the first part of 1967, a University of Hawaii contract team was scheduled to begin developing textbooks for a Lao language secondary school program. Hopefully, as more and more of the textbooks begin to be printed in Laos, the project will help develop an effective indigenous book industry.

Details of the above three activities have been noted in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of this report.

International Voluntary Services (IVS) has two separate contracts with USAID--one with the Education Division and the other with the Rural Development Division. Of the 33 volunteers working under the contract with the Education Division, 29 were active in teacher training institutions (23 in the ESP and six in ENI's), where they taught English, agriculture, home economics, handicrafts, and so forth. The chief of the IVS education team was general advisor, and in effect dean of the ESP English language section. Four additional Volunteers were teaching English in secondary schools. One Volunteer, a trained librarian, conducted the Lao library holdings survey (the first of its kind) which forms the basis for Table 2.

USIS

We have already noted the active role of USIS in the development of reading materials for villagers. In addition, USIS has sponsored the production of pamphlets and booklets that have been approved by pertinent ministries and then distributed through the USIS field service. These works have included leaflets for the Lao agricultural extension service, a manual on public health, a Boy Scout manual, the history of various provinces, and a book on administration for village leaders.

Because of the absence of universities in the Kingdom, and the small enrollment at the upper levels of secondary education, there has been no USIS PL 480 Textbook Translation Program in Laos; and, because of the general lack of English language ability among Lao students, the USIA easy-to-read Ladder Books Program has had little success in the Kingdom. However, two other USIS programs directly pertinent to the developmental book activities survey have been active: the English language teaching program, and the donated books program.

There is direct English teaching in the four binational centers at Vientiane, Savannakhet, Pakse and Luang-Prabang. As of January 1967, enrollment at the centers was 1,821:

Tuition students at the Lao-American Association in Vientiane	908
USAID-sponsored classes in Vientiane (for the USAID English language Training Center, for police, agricultural students, the Police Academy, Customs Bureau and Ministry of Public Works.	323
USIS-sponsored classes for Ministry of Information personnel	30
Royal Lao Government-sponsored class for army officers	20
Lao-American Association classes in Savannakhet.	290
Lao-American Association classes in Pakse.	175
Lao-American Association classes in Luang-Prabang	75

Of the tuition students at the Lao-American Association in Vientiane, the majority are Lao, but many are Thai, Vietnamese and Chinese. *Bonzes* (monks) have constituted the largest Lao tuition student group in Vientiane during recent years--equalling 35% and 14% of the enrolled Lao students respectively in 1966 and 1967. Some of USAID's local employees are ex-monks who have undergone their service in the priesthood.

The USIS donated book program has been active in a modest way for two or three years. The books are donated to USIA by U.S. publishers and shipped to USIS/Laos by USIA's Office of Private Cooperation. Some presentation copies have been distributed, and 900 volumes have been given to the ESP. USIS has contributed children's picture books to the cluster libraries, but few other books, because of the low English reading level in the villages.

THE ASIA FOUNDATION

For the cluster libraries, The Asia Foundation provides periodicals and journals in Lao and Thai, and as many Thai non-fiction books as it can get. It is also, as reported in Chapter 3, trying to develop ministerial reference and resource libraries through the donation of Thai books.

Through 1965, The Asia Foundation had shipped 6,451 books and 2,144 journals to Laos under its "Books for Asian Students" donation program. Of late, it has concentrated on filling specific requests for donated and/or purchased books, because it has discovered that mass shipments of English language titles may have little relevance to Laotians. It has donated French, Thai and English language books upon request to the Buddhist library at Luang-Prabang, to the Ecole Royale de Médecine, the Institut Royal de Droit et Administration, and to ENI's and the ESP.

The Foundation also has an active Chinese language primary school textbook project for the private Chinese schools. The 48 Ministry of Education-approved titles cover the entire range of subjects; they are adaptations of Chinese language textbooks used in Hong Kong and Singapore/Malaysia, and are printed in Hong Kong. The Asia Foundation has also provided 300-400 title sets of Chinese language libraries for Chinese secondary schools in important Lao cities; all are supplementary books.

During the early part of 1967, the resident representative of The Asia Foundation was negotiating with several Lao officials for the possible creation of a Lao Translation Society, to be backed by the Foundation, and to subsidize the translation and/or writing of books in the Lao language in order to provide more reading materials for citizens of the country. A Lao Translation Society (suggested by the Burma Translation Society) can prove helpful in coordinating various ministry and other requests for book printing.

APPENDIX A

EDUCATION IN LAOS*

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Formal education in Laos has traditionally been centered in the village wat, the Buddhist pagoda. Although the number of secular schools has been increasing rapidly, the traditional wat monastic-oriented education is often the only one available in many rural villages, and its enrollment is limited to boys. Monastic education is conducted by bonzes, the Buddhist monks. It contains much religious content, but is oriented primarily to practical needs--the skill and knowledge needed by boys to participate in traditional village society. To this end, boys are taught manual arts and reverence for their religion and their king. Above all, the monastic schools teach discipline, morality, respect for elders--all within the larger context of the Buddhist way of life.

The French, shortly after the establishment of their protectorate over the country, introduced the concept of secular education, and in 1917 the Lao schools were made part of a common Indochina education system in which every commune was to have an official primary school. After 1938, the schools covered six years of study, divided into an elementary primary cycle (1-3) and a complementary primary cycle (4-6); in addition to these schools, a 1939 order authorized *écoles de village* (village schools)--the school building and a house for the teacher to be provided by the village, and the teacher and school materials to be provided by the Government.

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*In addition to firsthand findings by the book survey team and material and information provided by the Ministry of Education and USAID, this chapter is based upon data from two excellent published works: (a) Student Records from Laos, an Evaluation for Placement of Students in American Educational Institutions, USAID/Laos, May 1967; and (b) Laos, Its People, Its Society, Its Culture, by staff and associates of the Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, 1963.

Elementary schools were established in increasing numbers and, between 1939 and 1946, enrollments jumped from 6,700 to 14,700. The Collège Pavié secondary school at Vientiane, first opened in 1925, was supplemented by three provincial secondary schools between 1945 and 1947. A very few Lao--usually members of wealthy elite families--left the country for higher education abroad.

The present national system of education in Laos was initiated in 1949, several years after independence. The educators patterned the various curricula on those of France, where leading citizens had studied, but the curricula were given a new direction toward nationalism. In 1962, the National Education Reform Act, developed with the assistance of UNESCO, was promulgated in an attempt to give more concrete direction to the nationalization of the educational system and program. In education, as in many other aspects of government, French labels have been retained for many items.

Given its unsettled political state of affairs since independence, it is not surprising that the Kingdom has been in a poor position to bring its educational resources to modern standards, even with substantial help from friendly nations. Professional education of personnel, supply of adequate staff, modernization of testing and evaluation, building of counselling services, provision of textbooks, libraries, laboratories, even physical space--all remain critical needs for an expanding population. No educational unit in Laos currently provides programs of study with the scope and depth sufficient to afford its graduates more than a minimum of insight and skill in specialized or advanced areas.

Learning is attained largely through memorization; discussion and problem-solving have little place in the classroom since the teacher and instructor lecture to all academic students, and in the science laboratory demonstrate to them as observers. The technical student has an advantage over the academic students; he can at least participate in practical exercises.

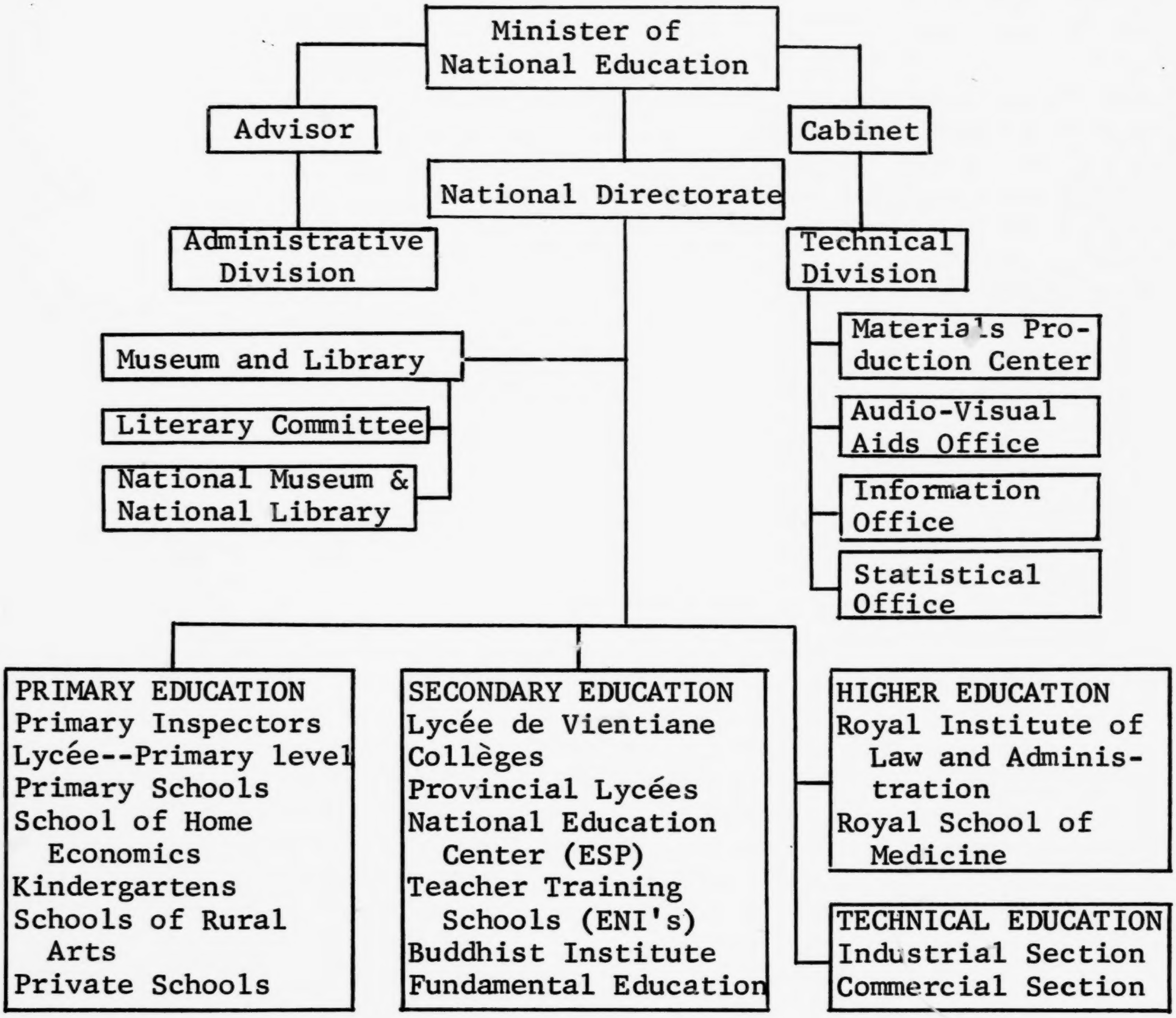
THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND COST OF EDUCATION

The Ministry of National Education is composed of four directorates that administer the Kingdom's schools: Primary Education, Secondary Education, Technical Education, and Higher Education. (Religious education falls under the administration of the Ministry of Cults.) Figure 1 on the next page, indicates the institutions that come under each directorate; most of these are discussed at greater length in this appendix. It also shows the location within the Ministry of the Materials Production Center, the Literary Committee and the National Library--all covered in the body of the report.

Although curricula are set by the Directorate of National Education, in other ways the administration of education is decentralized. The provincial governor receives general instructions from the Ministry, but the management of all administrative affairs is his responsibility. Inspection of the school system is carried out by Primary School Inspectors (PSI's), one for each of the 12 provinces, who report to the Director of Primary Education. The PSI represents the Ministry of Education, but works in close contact with the provincial governor.

Elementary schooling is traditionally the financial responsibility of the local communities; all citizens within five kilometers of a school are theoretically liable for the materials and labor needed for the building and maintenance of the schoolhouse and teacher's residence. The National Government is responsible for the support of all other

Figure 1. ORGANIZATION OF THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION


Minister of National Education
Advisor
Cabinet
National Directorate
Administrative Division
Technical Division
Materials Production Center
Audio-Visual Aids Office
Information Office
Statistical Office
Museum and Library
Literary Committee
National Museum & National Library
PRIMARY EDUCATION
Primary Inspectors
Lycée--Primary level
Primary Schools
School of Home Economics
Kindergartens
Schools of Rural Arts
Private Schools
SECONDARY EDUCATION
Lycée de Vientiane
Collèges
Provincial Lycées
National Education Center (ESP)
Teacher Training Schools (ENI's)
Buddhist Institute
Fundamental Education
HIGHER EDUCATION
Royal Institute of Law and Administration
Royal School of Medicine
TECHNICAL EDUCATION
Industrial Section
Commercial Section

Source: "Teacher Training in Laos," Francis H. Vittetow, USAID/Laos

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aspects of the public education system, including construction and maintenance of secondary and higher public schools, teachers' salaries at all levels, textbooks and basic supplies. Exercise books and writing materials are also supposed to be provided for the elementary primary schools (Grades 1-3).

Total cost to the Royal Lao Government of its primary schools in 1965-1966 was 707,000,000 kip, 8% of the total budget. If the budget is restated to include the national police but not the military, the share of education was 17%; if both police and military are excluded, education received 22% of the budget. Private education does not receive any regular support from the national budget, but the Director of National Education may include amounts for such subventions and scholarships in his annual draft budget if he wishes.

THE EDUCATIONAL EFFORT

We have noted that education in Laos is ordered in the French pattern, with primary schooling in two cycles of three years each--the elementary and complementary. Secondary schooling is provided in *collèges* for the first four years, in a *lycée* for six or seven years. Although officially the French educational regulations have been abandoned, the present system and curricula correspond closely to those of that early period.

Lessons are given in Laotian in the primary schools, although French is introduced in the second cycle to prepare students who are going on to secondary schools, which are conducted in French. English has been a relatively recent introduction into the curriculum, and knowledge of English is spreading in commercial and educational channels.

Three types of sponsorship provide education at the primary and secondary levels: public, semi-public and private. Since the public schools cannot accommodate the large number seeking admission, the Ministry of National Education licenses the supplementary units and imposes on them the same regulations in general as it does on public schools. While some degree of supervision is given to all schools, public schools are usually credited with higher standards than other schools in matters of admission, class enrollment, teacher qualifications, and classroom work. However, there are several private schools with equal or higher standards of instruction than found in the public schools.

Primary Schooling

Public primary schools are classified into four types:

Ecoles de villages, village schools usually for the first three grades. In November 1965, 46,681 students were enrolled in these schools, which are likely to be one-room affairs of thatch and bamboo with a dirt floor.

Demi-Groupes Scolaires, primary schools with more than three grades but usually less than six, and not yet recognized by the Ministry as a full *groupe scolaire*. 18,158 students were enrolled in them.

Groupes Scolaires, primary schools with six grades and designated by the Ministry as qualified to conduct a complete two-cycle primary course. The director of a *groupe scolaire* is a sub-administrator under the PSI with responsibilities for a number of *écoles de villages* or CREC schools in his area. 53,377 students were enrolled in *groupes scolaires*.

CREC (*Centre Rural d'Education Communautaire*) schools are village schools, often with only one grade, but sometimes reaching Grade 3. The teacher in these schools (which enrolled 9,568 students in villages, and 8,913 in *wats*) may be a *bonze* or a village volunteer who receives a small monthly allowance from the Ministry.

In addition to the 137,034 students enrolled in the public primary schools, 17,633 students attended the private primary schools in November 1965: 9,123 in Catholic schools, 3,428 in Chinese schools, 3,039 in Lao schools, and 2,043 in Vietnamese schools.

Enrollment in the primary schools has been increasing rapidly, in spite of the lack of school structures and qualified teachers:

1940-1941: 7,062
1946-1947: 24,057
1952-1953: 41,412
1958-1959: 101,059
1962-1963: 121,035
1965-1966: 154,667

In principle, primary school education is compulsory; but the enforcement of the law, which is tied to the requirement that all villagers must construct their own schools, is lax--realistically so, because many communities are poor and remote, and the Government is unable to provide teachers in sufficient number. Thus the rapid expansion of primary school enrollment has been spontaneous to the degree that no attempt has been made by the Royal Lao Government to enforce the compulsory education law. USAID estimates that nothing less than famine or military events will stop this expansion in enrollment, which has averaged over 13% annually for the past four years.

By 1965-1966 however, less than one-half of the school age population, and only 7% of Laos' total population (against the 10% considered by educationalists to be basic to economic dvelopment) were enrolled in the public and private primary schools. Of the 144,769 pupils then in public schools, about 80% (116,710) were in the first three grades, and there were particularly sharp dropoffs in enrollment after grades 1 and 3 (after three years of study there is an examination at the end of the first cycle before entering grade 4):

Table 4.

ENROLLMENT IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS
1965-1966 School Year (as of April 1966)

Pratom 1	67,008	Pratom 4	12,115
Pratom 2	28,807	Pratom 5	8,298
Pratom 3	20,895	Pratom 6	7,279

Source: Ministry of National Education

A study by Khamphao Phonekee, Director of Primary and Adult Education*, revealed that during the past decade there has been an 81% to 85% wastage in the primary schools--that is, of every 100 pupils beginning _pratom_ (grade) 1, only 15 to 19 remain in school by _pratom_ 6. He attributed the high dropout rate to several basic problems:

1. _Economic_: Laotian rural life requires parents to keep at home at least one of every three children to work for the family; and, although education is free of charge, students must still be dressed properly and their food must be prepared at regular times. Even if the Laotian farmer is not really poor, his closed economy and lack of monetary income tend to prevent him from purchasing what his children need for school.

2. _Social_: Religious Buddhists prefer to send their children to _wat_ (pagoda) schools rather than public schools; this often means that girls are excluded. Very often in the villages, the school is in the _wat_ and the _bonzes_ are teachers; girls, even when they are babies, are not allowed to come near or touch a _bonze_.

3. _Infant mortality_ is high, especially in the rural areas where the annual rate is 35 per 1,000. The overall enrollment loss is more than the 35 children who die during the school year, for when a brother or sister dies, surviving children often are asked to remain with their parents.

4. _Educational_: Many students repeat the first year, either because they first come to school too young in the urban centers (the general lack of kindergartens may induce urban parents to falsify birth certificates, so that children will not be home during working hours); or because they come to school too old in the rural areas

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*_Report on Laos_, UNESCO Technical Seminar on Wastage and Student Dropouts, Bangkok, September 5-12, 1966.

(they become discouraged, because they can't work with younger children). Another reason for the large *pratom* 1 enrollment is the rapid increase of educational rural centers (CREC's).

The primary school offers a general program emphasizing studies basic to childhood education. All instruction during each of the 10 school months is related to a center of interest. The center of interest furnishes the theme of the reading and exercises in Lao in *pratom* 1-3; and in Lao and French in *pratom* 4-6. To the degree possible, lessons in arithmetic, geography, science, agriculture, animal husbandry (or handicrafts), hygiene and religion also relate to the center of interest. The centers of interest are:

Our school
Our *wat* and our villagers
Our family
Our village and our village community life
Our rice and other crops
Our handicrafts
Our forests, rivers, lakes and mountains
Ways in and out of our village
Transport and our village
Our relations with the world outside our village

The programs are so formulated that the subjects for one year complement each other around a center of interest. Thus in *pratom* 4, when food is studied, the history of food is studied in history; food for animals in science; digestion and diet in hygiene; the largest producers of rice, corn and meat; and so forth.

To graduate from *pratom* 6, a pupil must pass a culminating examination leading to the *Certificat d'Etudes Primaires* (CEP) or may be excused on the basis of class achievement. Students who wish to take the entrance examination for a secondary school are usually required to have the CEP. In June 1965, only 4,325 of 6,843 pupils who took the examination--63.2% of the total--were successful.

Secondary Schooling

In the Laotian system, examinations loom large. To enter a secondary school (or teacher training school), the applicant--in addition to his CEP--must compete in an entrance examination with other aspirants seeking placement. Once admitted, his success from year to year is determined almost wholly by his performance in the end-of-year written examinations in the major subjects and oral examinations in the minor ones. Written examinations are generally of the essay type. A student passes or fails his year's work on the basis of the average of the grades he obtains in examination.

The number of students who are passed at the secondary level depends also upon a policy of reducing the number who can continue. Thousands are rejected each year for admission to or continuance in secondary schools, because there are insufficient facilities for them. A recent Ministry of Education position paper, stressing the need for increased secondary schools noted that "the system refuses admission to the secondary level for 90% of the children prepared for the secondary level (and thus) is unfair and anti-economic."*

There has, however, been a remarkable rise in enrollments since 1945 when no more than 200 students were registered: by 1955 a total of 652 were enrolled in secondary schools; in 1959, 2,396; in 1965-1966, 3,601; and in 1966-1967 (with the opening of four new _collèges_ in October 1966) enrollment rose to 4,165.

Ten _collèges_ provide (or will provide, when they are old enough) the first four years, or first cycle of secondary education. Three _lycées_ provide six years of education, and a fourth, _Lycée Pavié_ (the _lycée_ of Vientiane) provides a seventh, or "terminal" year, the graduates of which receive the _Baccalauréat II_, the final secondary certificate required for those students who wish to proceed to higher education:

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*_Laos Secondary Education_, Ministry of National Education, 1965.

School(s)	Enrollment	Grades Provided
Lycée de Vientiane	1,745	6B,6A,5,4,3,2,1,Terminal
Lycée de Savannakhet	549	6B,6A,5,4,3,2,1
Lycée de Pakse	541	6B,6A,5,4,3,2,1
Lycée de Luang-Prabang	463	6B,6A,5,4,3,2,1
Collège de Khammouane	308	6B,6A,5,4,3
Collège de Saravane	139	6B,6A,5,4,3
8 new collèges	420	6B & 6A, or only 6B

The first cycle begins with the seventh year of schooling and corresponds roughly in years (but not in content) with the U.S. junior high school. The grades are numbered in inverse order, with students beginning at Class 6, and going on to the 5th, 4th and 3rd, in that order. Lao secondary instruction is in French.* Since, however, most students are not sufficiently well equipped in that language by the time they finish primary school, all lycées and collèges have two Class 6 levels; depending on the student's success in French comprehension on the secondary school entrance examination, the accepted entering student goes on to either 6B or 6A. 6B is a year's course of studies concentrating on improvement in French written and oral fluency; successful 6B graduates go on to 6A. (In 1966-1967, there were about 940 students in each of the Class 6 levels). The Ministry traditionally has maintained that the use of French for a Lao child is one of the keys of access to the world of modern science and techniques.

At the point of entering the first cycle, the pupil chooses an academic or a vocational school; in each the program is quite specialized and not accompanied by the enriching experiences customary in U.S. schools. Curriculum in the academic schools includes ethics and civics, French, Lao and English; history and geography; mathematics, physical culture; drawing, music; and manual work. The curriculum of the Lycée Pavié is virtually the same as in a French modern and classical *lycée*.

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*Of 197 teachers in the Laotian secondary schools in 1966-1967, 156 were French, 30 Laotian, 6 American, 3 Canadian, and 1 English. We noted in Chapter 2 that the University of Hawaii, under USAID contract, will help the Ministry develop the first Lao language secondary school.

There are three technical *collèges* of the urban model in Laos, preparing students in industrial and commercial sections:

> *Collège Technique de Vientiane*: offers four years of training in the industrial section (comprehensive mechanics, motor mechanics, electricity, carpentry, masonry and electronics) and in the commercial section (clerk). Also 1-2 year courses of intensive training in rattan work or masonry, and a 2-year course in assistant teacher training.
>
> The *Collège Technique de Savannakhet* has the same 4-year courses, except for the lack of electronics. Its 1-2 year courses are also similar to those of the Vientiane school.
>
> The new (1964) *Lao-German Technical Collège* has a 3-year industrial section (comprehensive mechanics, electricity and motor mechanics.

Instruction in all three schools is in French--usually by Frenchmen, but by Germans at the Lao-German Technical College. All the schools have accelerated programs for those who take only one specialty. The schools train relatively few students, but in the absence of authoritative manpower need projections (the size and nature of the present Lao manpower pool is unknown) there is no way of measuring the gap in technical education.

The second cycle of the academic secondary schools consists of *Classe 2*, *Classe 1*, and in the case of Lycée Pavié, *Classe Terminale*. Entrance to a program is obtained by presenting an appropriate certificate of first cycle education and by successfully passing entrance examinations. A student then enrolls in a section (major) and pursues a standardized, narrow program which later determines his qualifications for public service and for a foreign university program.

Academic fields of specialization are: physical sciences, biological sciences, commerce and administration, agriculture, industry and medicine. In his last year the student takes philosophy, and a *mélange* of social studies. With each specialization a certain amount of support from a related field is included, but as in the first cycle, there are no elective courses and no enriching subjects.

Graduation from the secondary school is attained through nationwide competitive examinations; success in these tests is marked by the *Baccalauréat II* diploma. The percentage of those who are finally graduated from the 13-year primary-secondary program is very low--a situation considerably influenced by the philosophy of education and by the demand for civil servants in Laos. In 1966-1967, 323 students were enrolled in *Classe 2*; 170 in *Classe 1*; and 123 in *Classe Terminale*. Eighty-two *Baccalauréat II* certificates were awarded out of the 133 who took the examination. All those who receive the certificate receive scholarships for study at institutions of higher education abroad (most in France); in fact, there were more scholarships available than could be taken advantage of. An unknown number of foreign scholarship students fail to return to Laos.

Teacher Education

In 1955, Laos had only one small teacher training school located in Vientiane with a capacity of about 100 students. The following year, the Royal Lao Government and USAID prepared a plan for the development of teacher training, the principal element of which was the establishment of the National Education Center in Vientiane. This school, which has since been renamed the *Ecole Supérieure de Pédagogie* (ESP), had grown to 1,525 in the 1966-1967 academic year. Its programs qualify trainees to teach in grades 1 through 9: the two-year program fits teachers for instruction in *pratom 1-3*; the 4-year and 5-year courses prepare graduates for instruction in *pratom 1-6* and in the first grade of secondary school; and the 7 and 9-year programs enable their graduates to teach the remaining grades of first cycle secondary school.

There were four other teacher training schools in operation during our survey in Laos--the Ecoles Normales d'Instituteurs (ENI's) in Pakse, Luang-Prabang, Samthong and Vang Vieng. The first two were established in 1962 and had 309 and 190 students respectively in 1966-1967; Samthong (opened in 1964) had 70 students; and Van Vieng (in operation only one year) had 39. A fifth ENI at Savannakhet is scheduled to open in 1968-1969. Graduates of the two and four-year courses at the Pakse and Luang-Prabang ENI's can teach pratom 1-3 and 1-6 respectively, while the rural ENI's at Samthong and Van Vieng train teachers for pratom 1-3 only. Pupils come to the ESP and ENI's upon completion of pratom 6.

The Ecole Supérieure de Pédagogie operates three sections: Lao (410 students), French (929 students) and English (186 students); the ENI's have only Lao sections. Students in the ESP and ENI Lao sections use French language books, as do those in the French section at the ESP. The English section, a straight seven-year course at ESP for teachers of the first two grades of secondary school, was begun in 1965; upon completion of the seven years, a one-year program of study in an English language country is planned.* The International Voluntary Services operates the English section; it is also responsible for English language instruction at the ESP French section and has teachers at the ENI's.

Teachers in Laos have suffered in the past from having little prestige or hope of advancement, while corresponding civil service positions enjoyed social prestige deriving from honorific titles or decorations. Teachers held none of those coercive powers which tended to make a Governmental employee feared and respected. Above the village level the teaching staff was divided into a few rigid categories with little upward mobility. Since the coming of independence, Laos has attempted to make teaching an attractive career, with recruitment bonuses and professional examinations that enable teachers to rise from one rank to another.

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*Students of the French section can go to France after three or five years at ESP for one year of practice-teaching.

Despite the increased enrollment in the ESP and ENI's and the consequent increased number of teachers, the elementary teacher shortage remains critical. The schools have increased 13% per year, as we have noted, with still less than 50% of the school-age population yet enrolled. The need for teachers will increase accordingly. On the basis of the Kingdom's present employed teacher population of about 5,000 (20% of whom do not meet the recently established minimal qualification of one year's teacher training after completion of pratom 6), more than twice the 1966-1967 graduates from the teacher training institutions will be needed. Until the present institutions expand and new ones are opened, the demand will have to be met by unqualified personnel.

Higher Education

Higher education has not yet established a place for itself in Laos; yet some basic planning for it has been initiated, and some incipient higher educative activities are beginning to manifest themselves--all in Vientiane. Training programs, with varying and tentative degrees of higher education orientation, now exist in the fields of pedagogy, medicine, law and administration, religion and arts, but it is probably fair to say that full professional status cannot now be attained in Laos in any field; all final professional or liberal education must be completed abroad. This need for overseas training has, of course, contributed to the "brain drain."

We have already noted that, although the Ecole Supérieure de Pédagogie is essentially a secondary level institution, its more comprehensive programs--specifically the 7 and 9-year programs--have characteristics of higher education and professional training. Other institutions with such overtones are discussed briefly below.

The Ecole Royale de Médecine (Royal School of Medicine) was established in Vientiane in 1958. Prior to that time Lao nationals who wished to pursue a medical career had to begin in Hanoi, where medical training had been available since the turn of the century, or later in

Saigon and Cambodia. Because of the attractive foreign scholarships available to all Lao students who complete 12 or 13 years of public schooling, the medical school has recruited the best from among those students who have left the *lycée* at the end of the first cycle, with the *Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle*. That certificate, therefore, may be considered the educational requirement of admission.

Four years of training are available at the medical school. The first two years are spent in the pre-clinical disciplines of chemistry, biology, anatomy, physiology, etc. The third and fourth years are spent in the study of such specialties as pathology, dentistry, etc. At the end of their four years of training in Vientiane, students must go to France, or elsewhere, to complete their training and take their medical degrees.

The Ecole Royale de Médecine recognizes the great need for medical and para-medical personnel in Laos and is anxious to do its best to meet it. There are presently only 60 Lao doctors, whereas there is a need for 1,600. Dentists are in great demand, as are nurses, midwives, medical technicians, pharmacists, etc., and the school is developing programs in these fields as rapidly as it can. Instruction, of course, is in French. Some 60 students are admitted to the medical school each year, but the number is drastically cut at the end of the first year, both because many students prove incapable of handling advanced work, and because facilities are lacking for the accommodation of larger numbers in the upper classes.

Located near the medical school in Vientiane is the *Institut Royal de Droit et Administration* (Royal Institute of Law and Administration). The school's program extends beyond law and administration in the narrow sense and covers such subjects as political science, history, economics, some sociology, and international relations. Although classroom instruction is in French, three years of English language training are available.

This school presently has some 120 students who come primarily from two kinds of backgrounds. Group A comprises people who usually hold the *Baccalauréat II*, and who are often now in some kind of government or other service. This group in effect uses the school for an in-service, continuing education program; they usually take the diploma upon completion of three years of instruction. Group B, on the other hand, includes mostly younger students who hold the *lycée* First Cycle Certificate and have had limited work experience. Group B students usually take the diploma at the end of six years of instruction in the school.

The *Institut des Etudes Bouddhiques* (the Buddhist Institute) might be included with more logic among the teacher training institutions, rather than in a discussion of Lao "higher education." Yet it is the Kingdom's oldest advanced training program, is an educational activity of national significance and is of important implication to higher education. The Pali secondary school has a four-year program that, in turn, leads into a three-year cycle in the Institut des Etudes Bouddhiques. Upon completion of this cycle, students may take two additional years of work in the Institut before going on to complete advanced study in one of the Buddhist universities in Ceylon, India, Thailand, or Cambodia. A large number of the *bonzes* who are educated in this stream subsequently spend their lives teaching in the *wat* schools.

Instruction is also available in art, but its inclusion under the rubric of "higher education" may also be questioned. The *Ecole des Beaux Arts* (School of Fine Arts) occupies a complex of frame buildings in Vientiane at some distance from the other schools mentioned above. Its program is loosely knit and has not yet had opportunity to assume significant meaning in the cultural or social life of the nation. Instruction is in Lao. For the most part, Laotians who have sought advanced study in these areas in the past have done so in France or in other foreign countries.

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